This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

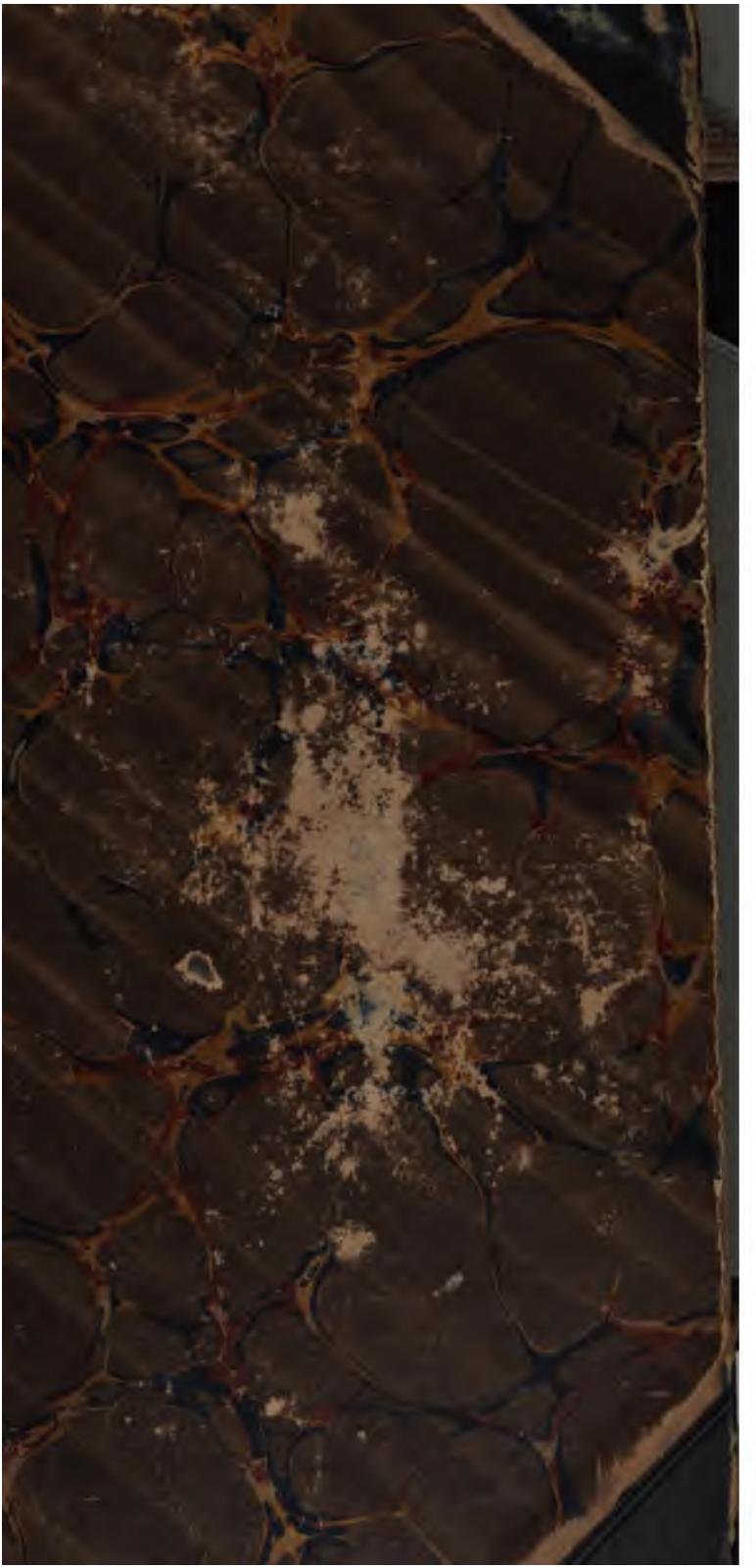
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

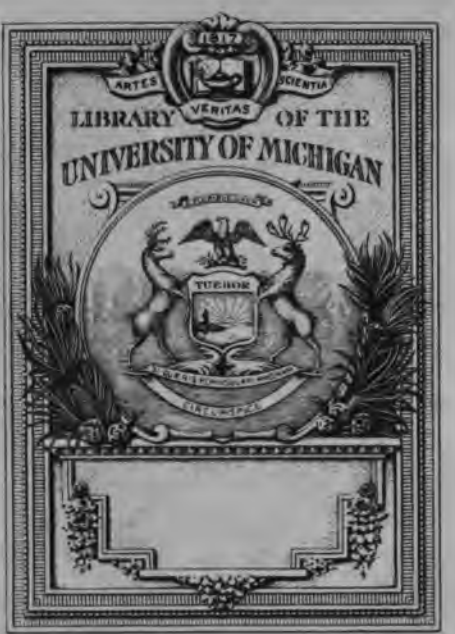
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

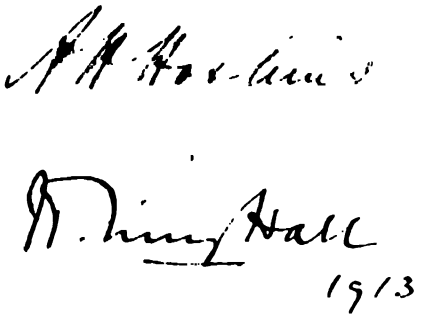
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`




ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



MEMOIRS

OF

ADMIRAL THE RIGHT HON^R^.

THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT,

G. C. B., &c.

BY

JEDEDIAH STEPHENS TUCKER, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1844.

LONDON:
Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY, WILSON, and FLEY,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Lord St. Vincent retires to his residence at Rochetts.—He refuses a challenge from Sir John Orde.—The British Cabinet contemplating a descent upon Brest by an army to be embarked in the Channel Fleet, and the Admiralty having cause to apprehend another Mutiny in that Fleet, Lord St. Vincent is appointed to the command 1

CHAPTER II.

On the Resignation of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Addington succeeds as Premier.—The Minister offers the Admiralty to Lord St. Vincent.—After an audience with the King, Lord St. Vincent accepts office.—Lord St. Vincent as First Lord of the Admiralty 124

CHAPTER III.

War with France.—Mr. Pitt's charges in the House of Commons against Lord St. Vincent's general administration of the Navy.—On the combination of the three influential political parties against Mr. Addington's Government; his Cabinet resigns.—Lord St. Vincent joins the Whigs in opposition to the succeeding Tory Administration . . . 201

CHAPTER IV.

PAGE

Death of Captain Jervis.—On the return of the Whigs to office Lord St. Vincent accepts the command of the Channel Fleet.—His Lordship is detached on a Special Mission to Lisbon.—The King changes his Ministers, whereupon Lord St. Vincent retires from the Channel Fleet and from Sea Service.—His interview with the King upon that occasion . 251

CHAPTER V.

Lord St. Vincent in Private Life. — The loss of Sir Thomas Troubridge. — Lord St. Vincent's Parliamentary Conduct. — Buonaparte's opinion of Lord St. Vincent. — Death of Lady St. Vincent.—Illness compels Lord St. Vincent to winter in the South of France.—He visits Marseilles and Toulon. — Returns to England.—His last illness and death 320

MEMOIRS

OF

EARL ST. VINCENT.

CHAPTER I.

Lord St. Vincent retires to his residence at Rochetts.—He refuses a challenge from Sir John Orde. — The British Cabinet contemplating a descent upon Brest by an army to be embarked in the Channel Fleet, and the Admiralty having cause to apprehend another Mutiny in that Fleet, Lord St. Vincent is appointed to the command.

UPON his arrival in England, Lord St. Vincent repaired to his seat at Rochetts, a moderate sized mansion on a small estate in Essex; and for some time the illness which compelled him to retire from sea-service closely confined him there.

As soon as the first symptoms of returning health were known, Sir John Orde, thinking himself personally affronted by what had transpired before Cadiz, demanded personal satisfaction from his former Commander-in-chief. A challenge was sent.

With his sound and lofty ideas of Naval discipline, and of the dignity of a Commander-in-chief, very little likely was Lord St. Vincent to compromise authority, or himself, by accepting this challenge ; — but Lord Spencer also supported the service. The King was advised to interpose : and the following letter was addressed to His Admiral.

TO EARL ST. VINCENT.

Admiralty Office, 9th October, 1799.

MY LORD,

The Earl Spencer having acquainted my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the King had received information that a challenge had been sent to your Lordship by Vice Admiral Sir John Orde, on occasion of some transactions which had taken place while he was employed under your Lordship's orders, during your command of His Majesty's Fleet in the Mediterranean, &c., and having at the same time informed their Lordships that His Majesty had been pleased to signify His express commands that your Lordship should be restrained from accepting any challenge from Sir John Orde, on pain of His Majesty's displeasure, I have their Lordships' commands to signify the same to your Lordship accordingly, and to add, that their Lordships expect you will pay due obedience to His Majesty's commands on this head. I have the honour to be, &c., EVAN NEPEAN.

Lord St. Vincent refused the challenge.

A feature, not generally known, of the policy of the British Cabinet of 1799, is, that the Minister contemplated, by a powerful descent on Brest, demolishing

the Arsenal, and burning the French fleet there; thus practically to retaliate for all the anxiety and expense which the continual alarm of invasion occasioned to England. The design was, that the invading army should be embarked in the Channel Fleet. In the summer, Lord Spencer had visited Torbay, on purpose to consult Lord Bridport on the practicability of the design. The noble Admiral, however, was not pressed for much consideration of the subject, as he had before intimated his intention to retire altogether from active service; but Captains Sir Edward Pellew and Sir John Warren, were requested to state their opinions at large; General Sir Charles Grey, having been selected to command the army to be employed, the whole resulting information was submitted to him; and he was desired to report to the Minister what military force might be necessary.

Sir Charles Grey suggested an army of 70,000 men, in three divisions;—one of them to make a feint upon other parts of the French coast; the other two to be the real assault, landing in Camaret and Douarnenez Bays.—The approaching spring was intended to be the season of operations.

But, pending the Cabinet's deliberations on measures of aggression on the enemy by England, the warnings came of danger to Herself, bringing with them far more urgent solicitude.

Information, the credibility of which could not be doubted, had reached Lord Spencer, that all was not right in the Channel Fleet; that the deep-rooted spirit of sedition among the crews, was so far from

being exterminated, that if the grounds for anticipating an immediate outbreak of another mutiny were not alarming; certainly the fleet had departed so far from subordination, that from none but an Officer of the very highest order, would it obey the recall. Nevertheless, so desirable did the descent on the enemy's coast appear, that it was decided it should not be abandoned, if by any means it could be prudently attempted.

It is not possible to imagine a naval command of greater importance to England, than the Channel Fleet was then to become. At all times it is the guardian, the last defence of our shores; now stability was to be restored to the bulwark; and invasion to be made on the enemy. But, singularly adapted as he was to emergencies, of whatever kind, it is remarkable by what rare combination of the qualities requisite for this command, Lord St. Vincent then stood superior among Admirals. Of stern disciplinarians he was the most courteous co-operator with troops, and of courteous co-operators, the sternest disciplinarian.*

But, that his Lordship's health would enable him to undergo the fatigues of the command was very doubtful. The Admiralty, however, made it the all-important point to obtain his assistance; and the Secretary, Mr. Nepean, was constant in his inquiries of Dr. Baird, now Lord St Vincent's confidential medical adviser, as to the state of his

* The plagiarism is worse than ridiculous,—but the combination was still more remarkable.

ordship's health — the Secretary even going so ar as to say that "the Government was most anxious about him; for that, from the state of the Channel Fleet, there was apprehension that insubordination was not quite subdued; and that Lord St. Vincent's services were at that moment urgently required.

For some time the only reply the Doctor had been able to make was,—his noble patient's serious illness, increasing dropsy, and that the case was one of very doubtful issue; but, happily, a change of weather, from a cold easterly to a mild southerly wind, effected what medical aid had not accomplished; a subsidence began.

It was Dr. Baird's duty to report this fortunate turn to Mr. Nepean; and he added also, that as the change of the year was towards the genial season, a favourable result might be expected.

Lord St. Vincent was then residing at Bath. One morning, not long after the propitious appearances, on the Doctor's paying his customary visit, his Lordship said, "Baird, I am going afloat;" and before the Doctor had time to further express his surprise than "Surely, my Lord, you are not!" — "Stop, Baird," his Lordship replied, "I anticipate all you are going to say; but the King and the Government require it, and the discipline of the British Navy demands it. It is of no consequence to me whether I die afloat or ashore: *the die is cast!*"—his Lordship's usual expression when his mind was made up to strong measures. He then informed Dr. Baird that Lord Spencer had visited him in that city

from London, for the express purpose of requiring his services, and that all was settled.

His Lordship's Secretary was sent for: in a very few days they were at Portsmouth, and the flag flew in the Namur. Captain Sir George Grey and Dr. Baird accompanied the Admiral, and Captain Sir Thomas Troubridge was nominated Captain of the Fleet.

That at any time an Admiral succeeding to command should be desirous of being surrounded by Officers formed in his own school, was as natural as it was wise in the Government to accede to it; but now was it doubly advantageous, when the re-establishment of discipline, which never can fail but through some fault of the Officers, was the main occasion of the selection of the Admiral. It will accordingly be seen, that Lord St. Vincent was desirous of calling to his assistance in the Channel, as many as he could of the Officers formed in the Mediterranean Fleet; that he sought them eagerly, parted with them grudgingly, as men on whom he was already sure he not hazardously might rely for that attribute of the perfect Officer, the enforcement of, and submission to, obedience. That the Admiralty could not, at a moment's notice, comply with these wishes as fully as his Lordship imparted them, may also be as easily supposed.

The Channel Fleet then consisted of the following line-of-battle ships (frigates, &c. being, for brevity's sake, omitted); and they are enumerated in the order of sailing and line-of-battle which this Commander-in-chief directed.

The Namur found the fleet off Ushant, and the ag was immediately shifted into the Admiral's old ompanion, the Ville de Paris.

ORDER OF BATTLE AND OF SAILING.

	GUNS.		
arfleur .	98	Rear-Admiral C. Collingwood .	Capt. Stephens
uperb .	74	. .	„ Sutton
xcellent .	74	. . .	„ Hon. R. Stopford
tlas .	74	. .	„ Jones
chille .	74	. . .	„ Murray
Neptune .	98	. :	„ Vashon
Royal Sovereign	100	Admiral Sir Alan Gardner, Bart.	„ Bedford
Cæsar .	80	. .	„ Sir J. Saumarez
Centaur .	74	. . .	„ Markham
Saturn .	74	. .	„ Totty
St. George .	90	. . .	„ Edwards
Elephant .	74	. .	„ Foley
Edgar .	74	. . .	„ Buller
Impetueux .	78	. .	„ Sir Ed. Pellew
Temeraire .	98	Rear-Admiral Sir J. H. Whitshed	„ Marsh
Ajax .	74	. .	„ Hon. A. F. Cochrane
Resolution .	74	. . .	„ Gardner
Defence .	74	. .	„ Lord H. Paulet
Robust .	74	. . .	„ Countess
Namur .	74	. .	„ Luke
Ville de Paris	110	Admiral the Earl St. Vincent .	„ Grey
Royal George	100	. .	„ Domett
Captain .	74	. . .	„ Sir R. Strachan
Ramillies .	74	. .	„ Grindall
Bellona .	74	. . .	„ Sir T. B. Thompson

	GUNS.		
Marlborough	74	Capt.	Sotheby
Terrible	74	„	Wolseley
Mars	74	Rear-Admiral Hon. G. Berkeley	Moncton
Glory	98	„	Wells
Hector	74	„	Elphinston
Magnificent	74	„	Bowater
Canada	74	„	Honble. M. De Courcy
Windsor Castle	74	Rr. Adl. Sir C. Cotton	Bertie
Prince	90	„	S. Sutton
Triumph	74	„	Harvey
Defiance	74	„	Shivers
London	98	„	Purvis
Venerable	74	„	Sir W. G. Fairfax
Warrior	74	„	Tyler
Cumberland	74	„	Graves

Whatever the Channel Fleet might have been found and termed in olden times, Lord St. Vincent soon discovered that it was to be no "bed of roses" for him. Indeed it presaged but inauspiciously of what he was likely to meet, that, close after the salute to the flag, when the Admirals and Captains first repaired to the Ville de Paris, to pay their respects to their new Commander-in-chief, it was openly announced to him by an Admiral high in command, that he felt dissatisfied that a command had been taken from himself by his Lordship, which that Officer was pleased to term his "birth-right," and because, forsooth, "he had always served in the Channel Fleet"! However impossible it might be that Lord St. Vincent could acquiesce in such an extraordinary doctrine of inheritance to com-

mand, nevertheless, as he had a high respect for that Admiral, who was so near his own rank, and an old acquaintance, Lord St. Vincent contented himself with submitting the circumstance to Lord Spencer. "But if we commence with an act of grace to the officers, it must be extended to the men also, Mr. Tucker," said his Lordship; and it happening that a Court-martial had sentenced a seaman of the Temeraire, named Riley, to the severest penalty for desertion, a general order immediately issued proclaiming his free pardon. As an accompaniment to this from the Admiral, and as a sample from the crews of the subordination they were in, his Lordship immediately noticed, that scarcely a petty-officer, when summoned by signal to the Flag-ship, would pay the compliment of touching his hat to the Officer on the Quarter-deck; or to the Commander-in-chief himself: and then, by almost the earliest despatches which he received from the Admiralty, he was cautioned "to be upon his most vigilant guard, for the Admiralty and the Home Department had intercepted letters which had discovered that a correspondence was going on, with a view that another general mutiny should dispossess the Officers of their command."

But, certain as Lord St. Vincent was that his appointment would be jealously received; prepared as he was for insubordination; instructive as had been his experience that not quite always might he safely rely for cordial co-operation upon those from whom he had the best right to expect it; not even Lord St. Vincent anticipated to have ascertained that,

which, as it is supported by the most undoubted authority, must not be omitted here, if the reader is to be placed by the side of the Officer, if the faintest review of this great Admiral's situation and conduct is to be taken: that when his appointment to the command of the Channel Fleet was known in it; as an earnest of the spirit in which his Lordship's system would be carried out, one of the Captains had the indiscretion to give as a toast at the table of the then Commander-in-chief, who also had the forgetfulness to permit it to be drunk in his presence, "*May the discipline of the Mediterranean never be introduced into the Channel Fleet!*" — that very discipline, which, when mutiny at the Nore and in the Channel, had well nigh driven allegiance from our crews, and left our "home upon the deep" without a defence, was found in the Mediterranean Fleet, and was now again summoned to restore safety to the Country.

Certainly that toast did excite in Lord St. Vincent great surprise and regret; certainly it did augur but ill to his future popularity in command, however little it intimidated his nerve. But if it indicated anything at all, it was at least this; that as his Lordship was not now commanding ships that had for years been witnesses of his immovable determination to be obeyed; the refractoriness he would have to combat, might not be confined to the seamen; that his system of discipline would not be palatable to more elevated ranks, even to those who might be called upon to support it.

But upon the receipt of such despatches as these,

was clear, that if a repetition of the dreadful scenes the law's severity was to be avoided, something ust be done. The emergency had already arisen, meet which the Admiralty had selected the Admiral; the question was, will unpopularity among is Officers deter the Admiral from meeting, in his wn way, the emergency for which he is selected?

Lord St. Vincent again came forth. With the ıtmost composure, as soon as he had read his letters, ɔefore he even quitted his chair:—"Bring me the Mediterranean order-books, Mr. Tucker," he said. And his Lordship at once issued every single order* tending to enforce the discipline and general good management of the ships, establishing every regulation, imposing every restriction which had before been productive of such good effect. He at the same time addressed a courteous but firm letter to all the Admirals and Captains†, requesting their cooperation. In a word, he let it be seen by them

* To avoid repetition, these Orders are not again copied; but it may be taken, that they were, as nearly as circumstances would permit, word for word the same.

† With the expression of my obligations to Sir Nisbet Willoughby for the communication of an occurrence on board the Russell, 74, the relation of it here may not seem out of place.

At that period there was, to use Sir Nisbet's own expression, every reason to expect that something would take place. The Russell's Captain (Captain Sawyer) gave orders to his Officers to have pistols in their cabins, and to be ready to be upon deck at a moment's notice. One night after supper a ball passed near the ward-room Officers' heads, fired from one of their cabins. It caused considerable startle to the Captain and ship's company, as well as to those Officers; and on one or two of them opening the door of the cabin from whence it came, it was found that one of the

all, that it was the stigmatised, the dreaded, — the unrivalled "discipline of the Mediterranean" that was to be introduced into the Channel Fleet, and from that moment be rigidly enforced.

Before he left England, Lord St. Vincent, having before seen much Channel service, had maturely considered the position for his force for this blockade; and as the general rendezvous and greater part of the stations were different from that of preceding Admirals, and were also, in spite of many a prediction of the impossibility, maintained with a continuance and a success alike unprecedented; his Lordship's own account of the fleet's station, and his advice to his second in command, are presented.

The rendezvous was changed, to "Well in with

boys of the ship had caused the alarm, by accidentally discharging one of the Officer's pistols.

The boy seemed frightened, and could not at first answer any questions; but at length he said that he had been "playing with the pistol." He was what is termed a knowing boy, and nothing more was said to him. But the firm impression upon the mind of Captain Sawyer and all the Officers was, that the ship's company had employed the boy to examine the pistols, and see if they really were loaded; and it was agreed that the accident was, as it had turned out, a good thing; for it let the men see that the Officers were on the alert.

Sir Nisbet Willoughby adds, that this was the period of Lord St. Vincent's firmness and particular strictness towards Officers as well as men; that none were allowed to sleep on shore, not even the Captains. But, continues Sir Nisbet, this strictness had the good effect perhaps of saving old England. Yet there was little said about it; peace took place soon after, and all was well; but Lord St. Vincent was perfectly aware of all that was going on.

Ushant with an easterly wind." The stationing of squadrons and frigates, was—"A squadron consisting of five ships of the line, is always anchored during an easterly wind between the Black Rock and Porquette, in the Bay of Brest. A squadron of frigates and cutters cruise between the advanced post and the Goulet, and a small squadron of three sail-of-the-line cruise between Ushant and the Black Rocks, to support the five sail-of-the-line there anchored. A ship-of-the-line and a frigate guard the passage Du Raz and the Penmark Rocks, within which lies the harbour of Quimper, only thirteen miles from Brest, into which the enemy endeavours to throw supplies from Nantes, the Morbihan, Rochelle, and Bourdeaux. Another ship-of-the-line is stationed between the Glennon Rocks and Port Quiberon, to mask Port l'Orient, and prevent supplies getting from Vannes and other parts of the Morbihan. Frigates are stationed all along the coast of the Bay of Biscay, from Isle Dieu to Cape Finisterre."

The advice left to his second in command* was—"I recommend you in the strongest manner *never* to be farther than six or eight leagues from Ushant with the wind easterly; and if westerly, to make the Saintes as often as the weather will permit; and when the wind is in such a point as to enable

* It has not been thought objectionable to resort to a few year's later period of Lord St. Vincent's service on this station for advice, because the order of cruising off Brest was precisely the same, and equally successful, and because it is so desirable to place the advice and the stationing together.

the French to slip out of the Port of Brest, to stand-in, on the first of the flood, so far as to see the in-shore squadron, unless it should be a fog, otherwise the ships appointed to that important service may not feel the confidence so necessary to keep them in their post,—a failure in which has frequently happened before I was invested with this command.

"I never was on a station so readily, and with such little risk to be maintained as that off Ushant with an easterly wind, owing to the length and strength of the flood-tide.

"It is important that you should make timely demands for water and provisions, for both the squadron immediately under your orders, and for the in-shore squadron, from the Agent-victualler at Plymouth; and your experience in the expeditious manner of clearing them, marks the facility of these supplies. The ships of war sent to Cawsand Bay to replenish, will bring out such supplies of stores as you may have occasion for,—and you are upon *no* occasion to authorize any ships to go to Spithead, unless you receive special orders from the Admiralty, or from me."

To this it may be useful, for the unprofessional reader, to add, that of which all sailors are perfectly aware, viz. to preserve the station as Lord St. Vincent had resolved it should be kept, an arduous manœuvre, which, in constancy, former blockades had not witnessed, was now necessary — that, whatever were the weather, the whole fleet should tack or wear once every night. That this impera-

e necessity, especially as the Commander-in-chief quired the presence on deck of the Captain him- if and every Officer during the evolution, did not fuse palatableness to the Admiral's conduct of s fleet, few will need be informed; but, that the sult was the continual presence of the blockading rce before the hostile port, is equally certain; and r that purpose it was that the unsavory, but mas- rly, movement was exacted.

The descent upon Brest was now uppermost in ord St. Vincent's thoughts. Before he left Eng- and, his Lordship had been ordered by the Cabinet o consult with Sir Charles Grey on the general racticability of the design. It immediately was painfully manifest to both Officers, that no descrip- tion by either map or information, of the immediate approaches to the town, was offered to them; except, as Sir Charles Grey noticed, by hearsay, no one knew anything at all about it.*

* "Ah, Mr. Tucker," said the Admiral, "had Captain Jervis surveyed Brest in 1774, in 1800 Lord St. Vincent would not have been in want of his information."

Perhaps a note, containing some few remarks which an able hand, now dead, collected from some very intelligent Officers, about the harbour of the mighty Brest may not be misplaced.

French ships bound to Brest, more especially those which approach from the westward, never endeavour to make Ushant, but invariably shape their course to make the highland to the southward of Douarnenez Bay. On entering the Goulet, you should, with all winds, and at all tides, prefer the northern passage, to avoid the rocks and shoals on the south-west of the Mingen, which render the southern passage very intricate and dangerous. Having passed the Mingen, you may run as you please for the anchorage in the roads, the whole of which is good holding-ground;

For one point both Officers, notwithstanding such lamentable absence of all local knowledge, urgently stipulated,—profound secresy. Sir Charles Grey called it the very soul of the enterprize. Lord St. Vincent entreated that, notwithstanding the lack of information, "not one of the French emigrants should be consulted, or in any way enabled to probe the design;"—then while Sir Charles Grey "feared that from the discussions at Torbay "too many already knew of the intention," Lord St. Vincent, to his mortification, found that an Officer had already been sent to Jersey to collect information from a confidential French Officer, who was said to be acquainted with the place, and from a noble *émigré* there residing.

and one hundred sail-of-the-line may be placed there, so as not to be seen even in the Goulet; nor can one of the ships in the harbour be seen even from the anchorage in the roads, the entrance to which is completely masked, until you arrive within about three hundred yards; nevertheless the approach is very safe, there being neither rock nor shoal without, and only one rock within, and that is close to Rose-point, from whence it takes its name; and to avoid which, you should keep on the western shore. The harbour, which in fact is a river about three hundred feet wide, is secured at each end of the extent of the arsenal by a chain; but on the entrance from the roads, boats or steamers may with great facility land men on the Victualling Yard on the western shore, or at the Shot Magazine, without the necessity of breaking the chain. The ships in ordinary are laid up the whole extent of the arsenal. There are thirty-three feet at low water, and a rise of twenty-two feet throughout the harbour, to within a few feet of the frontage of the arsenal, which occupies both sides of the river, and is capable of accommodating twenty fitting-out sail-of-the-line, without interfering with each other.

After considerable discussion, the point which should be assaulted was agreed upon; and with that understanding Lord St. Vincent left England. On the first day of clear weather, after he had shifted his flag, his Lordship stood-in with his whole force close to the entrance of Brest, silently observing through his glass the appearance of the coast; when, infinitely more to his regret than, after what had passed, to his astonishment, he saw the French throwing up very powerful batteries on the identical spot on which it had been decided to land the troops, while the frigates made the *coup de main* on the forts! It was clear, therefore, that by some means or other Buonaparte had received accurate information of the design: the whole enterprise was therefore abandoned, and the blockade of the port became the only duty to be performed.

But scarcely had the fleet taken up the various stations which Lord St. Vincent assigned to it, than there arose a tremendous hurricane, such as the oldest seaman had rarely remembered anywhere, and to such as these latitudes but very seldom can be subject. The efforts of the tightest frigate, and of the mightiest first-rate, were feebleness itself against the storm; and the whole fleet, every single ship in it, was blown off. The severity of the gale commenced early in the morning of the 17th May, when two line-of-battle-ships were noticed to have lost their main-top-masts. At eleven the Ville de Paris carried hers away, and split her fore and main stay-sails. At noon, such was the violence of the tempest that Lord St. Vincent deemed it prudent

to commit each ship entirely to the discretion of her own Officers, and he signalled the fleet to proceed to Torbay, or to whatever port they could fetch, in disregard of the order of sailing.

Two ships of the line, the Warrior and the Saturn, were remarked to wear and stand to the southward. The Ville de Paris having weathered Ushant, scudded; but she pitched and rolled like a mere plaything of the storm. One enormous sea struck her, which, beating in her stern windows, forced its way to the Admiral's cabin, and tore away or upset everything; the great three-decker herself staggering awfully under the blow. At that time the Commander-in-chief was on the Quarter-deck, sitting in a bight of the main-top-sail, in which a seat to windward had been formed for him; two quarter-masters were stationed beside him, to assist his infirm and aged frame; and from thence he gave his orders to his fleet. When this sea struck the Ville de Paris, it literally deluged the Quarter-deck; and on one of the quarter-masters (Brown) shaking the water out of his neck, "Pooh, pooh, man!" said the old Admiral, "stand still, and do as I do; let it alone: don't you see it will run off you?"

The Ville de Paris reached Torbay on the morning of the 18th. Two wretchedly constructed sloops foundered; but all the rest soon after joined, or were heard to be in safety at Plymouth or Portsmouth, excepting the two that wore; and for some time great anxiety was felt about them, as they were known to be not over strong ships. But in a few

days they also returned. It appeared that, complaining in their weather rigging, they were unable to carry sail on the larboard tack to weather Ushant, and therefore they stood to the southward; but that on that course they were soon favoured with a change of wind to the opposite point.*

Great was now the exultation, and frequent the significant looks among those who "had always

* Does not this somewhat bear out the "Law of Storms"? It is impossible to repress a sigh, that in the progress of science this discovery has been fated to make so late an appearance; and one willingly turns from grief for past shipwreck, to hope of future safety: but this anticipation is ventured with the greatest diffidence; indeed, if the theory propounded did not present itself with at least one of the tests of nature's laws, simplicity, the author is too conscious of his own deficiency of understanding to have ventured to allude to it; and even now, Galileo's shrewd observation occurs with double force to mind, that in proportion to ignorance is the readiness to pronounce, and in proportion to knowledge the diffidence in offering opinions, on discoveries in natural philosophy. ("*Par mi d'aver per lunghe esperienze osservato,*" &c., &c.—every school-boy knows the passage.) The Admiralty will, of course, require the future Officers to understand Colonel Reid's theory.

But, as we are on science, one question more: Why has not England Her board for the encouragement of science? Not only can she afford it; and civilization and humanity demand it, if it be only to protect the inventor whose abode is poverty and friendlessness; but since such a pitiful reason, when science is the object, must be given, She would be the *gainer* by it.

In his speech to the Chamber of Deputies, when proposing a reward to M. Daguerre, M. Du Chatel announced the proper principle: "The government ought to put society in possession of an invention which general interests demand should be known, providing that the price, or rather the reward of the discovery, *be secured to the author.*" Sentiments truly worthy a generous and mighty Nation.

said that a blockade, which might do very well before Toulon or Cadiz, could never be maintained before Brest." But this was yet to be seen. And at least their smiles were remarkably short-lived, only betokening their ignorance of how essential an ingredient of him whose flag now flew over them it was, to persevere, and to rely on his own judgment. The command issued, to refit and fill up water as speedily as possible; the Commander-in-chief announcing it to be his intention to retake his station, without any deviation from his former orders.

Nor was the manner in which the Admiral commanded the watering itself to be conducted, a whit more palatable to many. The order came forth, that a Captain of a line-of-battle-ship, with a party of Marines, the commanding Officer of that force being its respective Captain, with a Subaltern, should keep guard at the watering place day and night, to be relieved every twenty-four hours, in rotation. They were also commanded not to suffer any petty officer or man, upon any pretence whatever, to quit their boat; while general orders announced that a boat should be sent on shore every day, a Lieutenant commanding her, to bring off any Officer or man who might have had leave, the commanding Officer of the boat being strictly enjoined to put off from the shore and return to the ship at sunset; after which no boat was permitted to go on shore, upon any pretence whatever, without special leave from the Captain.

These orders were extremely disrelishable to the Officers, but were the preservation of the seamen.

The Captains were indignant at being compelled to mount guard for twenty-four hours at the watering place; a tent made of a boat's sail being their sleeping abode; and they thought it so great a hardship, that it was proposed to make a representation on the subject. But Lord St. Vincent hearing of the intention, instantly stopped it, by intimating to one of them, "that it had reached his ears; that it could only have been in times of the most relaxed discipline that such a regulation had not been enforced; that when he commanded the Foudroyant, he had always taken his turn with the Captains to mount guard at the watering places; and that, think or do, write or say, what they might or chose, he was determined that while he commanded the Channel Fleet, his Captains should perform their duty."

A consciousness of the hesitating caution which ought to check the pen which dares such remarks on times long gone by, and on conduct which has not yet met the public eye, has suppressed the mention of many incidents which could be proved on testimony indisputable. But, that it may at once be seen that the above facts are well founded, and the incomparable manner with which, when the occasion demanded, Lord St. Vincent would enforce his orders, a copy is offered of a communication which a Captain who attempted to thwart these regulations, received; the Captain of the Fleet, Sir Thomas Troubridge, being instructed to convey the warning, which the Commander-in-chief himself penned.

TO CAPTAIN

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 18th August, 1800.

SIR,

I am directed by the Commander-in-chief to state to you, that he is not unacquainted with your having gone on board the Ramillies, and endeavoured to invite Captain Grindall to make common cause with you in resisting a wholesome and necessary order he judged fit to give, touching a guard under the command of a Captain of a ship-of-the-line at Brixham watering-place; nor of the temperate, judicious, and officer-like conduct which Captain Sawyer, of the Russell, observed upon that occasion; and I am directed by Admiral Lord St. Vincent to admonish you for that very dangerous proceeding, bordering on an excitement to sedition, which he only hinted at in his last public letter to you on a similar subject, not wishing to do more than seemed to him, at the time, necessary to call you to your senses; but now, having been made acquainted with the licentious language you have held at Spithead, respecting Mr. , and other matters in relation to this order, his Lordship finds it necessary to apprize you that he cannot in future overlook behaviour so highly incompatible with the due subordination and discipline of the fleet under his command.

I am, &c. THOMAS TROUBRIDGE.

But Officers of all ranks, from the second in command to the lowest grade, were dissatisfied with the boat-orders, and specially with that one which forbade their having a boat after sunset. Discipline, however, and the seamen, found the benefit of the restriction.

Their humane, and ever considerate Commander-in-chief, knew the frailty of their nature; he felt for the men who, when on shore upon an open beach, exposed to all weathers, and waiting at all hours of the night for the Officer, could not resist the temptation to go to the neighbouring public-house, where, if they had no money in their pockets, their clothes would be taken in exchange for spirits; he knew, that many a promising and well-deserving man had thus been lost to himself and to the service; for, while the man was in the grog-shop, the Officer would frequently run down to the beach, in a great hurry at being so late; go off immediately, regardless of who were absent; then the seaman, for fear of proper punishment for having left his boat, was frightened from returning the next morning, as he otherwise would have gladly done, and attempted desertion; though he knew, that there would be rewards for his apprehension, and parties with police were stationed in all the neighbouring villages to arrest him; and the consequences, as Lord St. Vincent knew, were, those terrible floggings round the fleet, by sentence of Court-martial on the poor wretches who had fallen victims to the indulgences to their Officers. His Lordship was aware of all this: so he determined to stop it by issuing these orders, which sheltered the men from temptation.

That he should lose the encouraging smile of co-operating approbation—that he should draw down odium abundantly on himself, he also well knew. He was, however, determined to persevere against chilling frowns and continual gloom; and perse-

vering, he not only succeeded, but was proudly rewarded. From February 1800 to January 1801, the period of his command of the Channel Fleet, except on Officers, there were but two Courts-martial for breach of the orders of discipline: one on a marine, whose sentence the Admiralty remitted on supposition, it is believed, of insanity; the other, on the only seaman tried for desertion, whose punishment Lord St. Vincent remitted, in compliment to the rest of his fleet!*

But let us return to narrative. The fleet, having refitted, resumed its station; and now was to be seen, whether they had been blown away by a chance hurricane, of violence not to be again reasonably apprehended; or whether the Commander-in-chief really had planned a blockade beyond the powers of a British line-of-battle-ship? The answer is—for one hundred and twenty-one days following that on which they reappeared off Ushant, the whole force so maintained its station, that there was only one day, one of densest fog, on which the main body of the fleet did not communicate by signal with the in-shore squadron. This, it is assumed, is conclusive.

A wearisome detail of the rarely varying routine of a successful blockade is not intended—would not be endured; neither would it be useful or instructive to any one. The services the fleet renders, always thankworthy, are the more so because of this

* The offence by Riley, of the Téméraire, whose sentence his Lordship remitted on assuming the command, had been previously committed.

very monotony, so irksome and trying to the quick restlessness of the seamen's "minds and bodies in captivity on board their own ships;" but here is neither time, nor space, for a recital of such dull proceedings.

The hostile force within Brest harbour alone consisted of forty-eight sail-of-the-line and twenty frigates, perfectly ready for sea, besides other squadrons in the adjacent roadsteads. But the French did not attempt to give battle. Three times, indeed, portions of the fleet did try to slip out, but they were immediately detected, and retired hastily: and, excepting such occurrences, the British fleet held the port to the close of the season in which it was possible to maintain this position, or indeed for any operations by sea, in one uninterrupted blockade, of which, as may be fancied, the unchanging regular duties became insipid, heavy, and tiresome beyond description.

But now is the time to advert to the preservation of the health of the crews; because in the dull pent-up life of such service, this was the consideration of utmost importance; and because, though this had always occupied Lord St. Vincent's anxious thought (his already-given letters and orders attest it), yet during this command in the Channel it was, that he applied to the subject that great attention, from which there has resulted, to the seamen an enjoyment of health and comfort, and to the Country a physical efficiency in Her fleet, which, up to that period, was quite unprecedented, and, it is believed, has never since been surpassed.

It is manifest that this is the subject of the Commander-in-chief's care on which he stands most in need of guidance by the experience and science of others. Now for all such advice, Lord St. Vincent leant entirely on Dr. Baird; who, though ostensibly he was only the surgeon of the flag-ship, yet in reality performed all the duties of the Physician to the fleet, the nominal occupant of that office, Dr. Trotter, continually residing at Plymouth.

Happily for the Navy of that period, the havoc with which scurvy used to depopulate our ships had been witnessed by none but the very oldest Officers; to the rest, its destructiveness was known only by hearsay; and to ourselves, of now-a-days, the narrative which we read of the ravages and misery which it dealt among the crews of Lord Anson and the circumnavigators, seems hardly credible, though we know the tale to be too sadly true. Health had been found, first, in fruit and vegetables, onions being very salubrious; afterwards, and chiefly, in the juice of lemons, now, in citric acid.

There nevertheless was, in 1800, a great deal yet to be done. Though our present Surgeons have but little experience in scurvy, it was far otherwise then: lemon-juice was not in near the general use which skill and experience afterwards induced; sickness and mortality, to a degree which now would hardly be believed, came by "the ulcer," and by what is known to medical science as "ship fever;" the ulcer, of malignity and loathsomeness indescribable, the stench of its putrid exhalation being such as to shock the mere passer over the ship's

side; the fever, arising from confined and foul air, the breath and perspiration of the crews, and from lack of personal cleanliness in the seamen. Then the ship was unskilfully ventilated, ill-stowed, and, from an injudicious washing of the lower deck, unnecessarily damp. Also, it must be borne in mind, that salubrious though fresh meat and vegetables were known to be, yet the blockade of Brest was not, like those of Toulon and Cadiz, with regular supplies of those necessaries within their reach. During one hundred and twenty-one days that the station was maintained, a duration of previously unparalleled length, not one single meal on any species of fresh provisions was served out to the fleet! And as, before Lord St. Vincent took the command, the crews had been far from healthy, on such a rigorous blockade as this the usual effects of salt diet made its sooner appearance, — for, on board ship, scurvy is ever at hand, watching to assert its power. Some cases soon appeared in the flag-ship herself: if therefore she, whose people were the object of such continual care, did not escape, the malady would soon appear throughout the whole fleet. And so it happened, and profusely, even until it became a question whether the blockade could be any longer maintained.

Recourse was had to the beneficent lemon-juice: but of the mode, of the proportion with sugar, and of the regularity with which it then first, and at Dr. Baird's suggestion, was administered to the crews, only Doctor Baird's own official letter to the Commander-in-chief ought to relate.

TO EARL ST. VINCENT.

Ville de Paris, at sea, 25th June, 1800.

MY LORD,

I beg leave to state to you that some scorbutic cases have lately appeared in this ship, and to observe, that as this disease shows itself in the Ville de Paris, where the economy of health is so much attended to, I think it extremely probable that the same tendency either does, or soon will prevail, in a greater degree, on board other ships in the fleet, particularly if bad weather should ensue, unless prevented by the timely use of lemon-juice; I therefore take the liberty of suggesting its use under the following regulations.

One ounce of lemon-juice and half an ounce of sugar, mixed in a half pint bottle, as a daily allowance to each man for three weeks, and continued every other day afterwards till the arrival of the ship in port: no ship, after being a fortnight in harbour, and having the advantage of refreshments, should be allowed it till she has been at sea one month, unless a similar tendency is shown; and its use always to cease in port. The First-lieutenant, Master, and Surgeon, to inspect the mixing of it; and the Master and Surgeon to make oath that it has been issued only agreeable to such instructions, unless for the cure of scorbutic cases. The Purser to have it in his charge, and account for its expenditure upon oath.

By observing these precautions, that kind of abuse, which I fear has prevailed, of so expensive and salutary an article, will be prevented, and the saving to Government considerable. When lemon-juice and sugar were formerly issued, the allowance was three-quarters of an ounce of lemon-juice and two ounces of sugar; but as half an ounce of sugar with one ounce of lemon-juice makes half a pint of palatable beverage, any greater quantity seems unnecessary. I have the honour to be, &c. ANDREW BAIRD.

A general order from the Commander-in-chief established what is here prescribed, to be observed by the whole fleet. What success resulted to the adoption of the advice, and to the systematic care for health then introduced, will presently appear.

Though the chief, yet medicinal efficacy was not the only recommendation of Dr. Baird's suggestion. The economy which it effected in the article of sugar in the Channel Fleet alone was of £12,000 a-year; and when, as soon afterwards followed, a general order established this as the antiscorbutic beverage of the whole Navy, an annual saving resulted, of which the enormous amount, considering for how small an article, should be left to conjectural reflection.

There were other important regulations for health which at this period originated, and by degrees, chiefly by example from the Ville de Paris, were carried into general practice. The sweeping away from the upper deck of those filthy pestilential nuisances, the hog-styes, had indeed been partially commenced in the ships before Cadiz; it was now carried throughout, and a great step of further progress made; the space the hog-sty occupied became the present sick-bay, rather resembling an hospital ward than the previous canvass-skreened sick-berths; the newly arranging the ship's wings and store-rooms, for her more thorough ventilation; the dry-scrubbing with sand and stone instead of the previous washing the lower and orlop-decks; the more frequently airing the beds and bedding of the crews,—every week indeed, when the weather at all

permitted; and the requiring a compliance with all these regulations to be entered in the daily Log, so that neglect could not escape detection: thus, together with the severest attention to cleanliness, in which the smallest minutiæ were made of the greatest importance, and the occupying the convalescent man's* unemployed hours in picking oakum, for which bags were hung up in the ship, health was cherished, and the comfort of the invalid consulted; since it was impossible to put an impenetrable bar to sickness and accident. That a preservation of health will also be found in the maintenance of discipline and order, need scarcely be suggested.†

It now only remains to state the result. Though authentic means are at hand, of contrasting by figures the number of sick landed from this Channel Fleet, with that in multitudes from former fleets, of smaller force, after shorter cruises, and, of course, since the first use of lemon-juice; yet, as the comparison might seem invidious, all that will be stated is, the success which now attended Lord St. Vincent's general system of management.

* Our veterans need not be told that, not the present comfortable speedily-drying hair-bed was then supplied to the seamen, but one made of dirty, knobby, damp-retaining floc. And nothing but a happy ignorance of sickness will induce a smile at this oakum picking; which at once conduced to the convalescent's recovery and the ship's economy.

† The statements which Sir Gilbert Blane has furnished of the contemporaneous increase of sickness with the gradual relaxation of discipline in the times of various mutinies, are not less instructive and judicious, than striking.

The fleet before Ushant consisted of never less than twenty-four sail-of-the-line, besides frigates, sloops, &c.; their crews always exceeded 23,000 men, and were continually on board. Not only did no hospital ship, the attendant of former cruizes, accompany this, to receive the worst cases, but each ship was ordered to retain her own invalids on board as much as possible, instead of sending them to Plymouth and Portsmouth; and, what can scarcely be too often repeated, not one single fresh meal was served out to the fleet.

In November, when it was known at the Admiralty that the whole force had again anchored in Torbay, the Medical Board, reasoning on the result of former cruizes, so confidently expected that such a lengthened continuance at sea would now have accumulated the number of the sick to be sent on shore to an amount requiring more than the usual provision for their care, deemed it necessary that a member of the Board itself should be at Torbay, in readiness to superintend the Surgeons of the hospital and of the fleet; and that member, Dr. Johnson, reckoned on so many patients, that as there was then no hospital at Paington, and he apprehended that at Dartmouth would be insufficient, he made arrangements for renting barns and houses for sick quarters.

Out of the whole fleet, the number of cases sufficiently serious for hospital care, were *sixteen!*

It is scarcely possible to attribute too much importance to the service to the Country, which

the combination of naval discipline and medical skill had here rendered; whether in permanently "strengthening the sinews of that arm on which our naval existence mainly depends," * or in holding Brest in blockade at that critical period. It is well known, that a large army was already embarked in the hostile fleet, eager to seize the first opportunity of any considerable diminution in the blockading force, to slip out, and try a descent upon Ireland, for which attempt the enemy actually got three times under weigh, but was compelled to retire,—and if the French had succeeded in landing any powerful body of men in Ireland then, excited, insulted, exasperated as the Irish then were,† the shock would have vibrated throughout the Empire.

That lemon-juice is an infallible antiscorbutic, assuredly was known long before. It had been proved extensively in the Navy, ever since 1796. But that it became an inseparable portion of the seaman's diet after a month's absence from port, as well as all the other medical reforms which Lord St. Vincent then established, are attributable to Dr. Baird's advice: and they only who can picture to themselves a large fleet at sea, can imagine the exertions demanded from the executive superintendent, who carries out an introduced system through such an extended force.

* From Sir John Herschell's beautiful eulogy on the use of lemon-juice by the Navy.

† The Insurrection Act in force; the Habeas Corpus Act suspended; the use of arms prohibited: Martial Law proclaimed!

Every ship, however distant, even the in-shore squadron, was of needs, and frequently, visited; the progress of the sick, the state of the healthy, minutely inspected; and this, with all that precision, and all that formality, which the importance of life, the introduction of novelties, and the eradicating inveterate habits and systematized error, demand. But this could be accomplished only by boating from morning to night, not seldom the perilous, always the very fatiguing service. Nor let it be for a moment supposed that Lord Spencer's administration of the Navy was inattentive to such zealous exertions. As soon as they were known, the additional pay of the Physician to the fleet was offered to Dr. Baird; but this he, to Lord St. Vincent's high content, declined. There seems but the Commander-in-chief's own testimony of such zeal to be wanting; and it shall be extracted from his reply to the Secretary of the Admiralty, who, when noticing the difficulties which his Lordship and the Doctor had met with from the Medical Board, asked, if he had given his Surgeon the appointment of Physician to the fleet, for which he had shown himself so qualified?

Royal George, before Brest, 14th August, 1800.

DEAR NEPEAN,

I have given Mr. Baird no appointment, nor shall I. But for his exertion, half the ships in the squadron would have been laid up. He is the most valuable man in the Navy, not excepting the Board itself, with which he shall correspond no more. I am your affectionate

ST. VINCENT.

Before the fleet sought shelter again in Torbay from the south-west gales, a general order was issued, forbidding every Officer, of whatever rank, from going farther from the margin of the sea than Paington or Brixham; the understanding being, that the distance of those places, or three miles, was prescribed everywhere. Nothing could exceed the displeasure which this order occasioned. The Flag-officers and Captains would have remonstrated upon it with the Commander-in-chief, had not one Divisional Admiral informed them, that when the fleet last put into Torbay, he himself (as was the custom with most of the Officers before Lord St. Vincent took the command) went to a ball at one of the neighbouring towns; that when he returned the next morning he found the fleet was gone; that he had been obliged to make the best of his way to Plymouth, to proceed from thence in a frigate; and did not join the fleet off Ushant till the following day. That gallant Admiral hoped at the time, that as Lord St. Vincent had said nothing to him on the subject, his Lordship was unacquainted with the circumstance; while an apprehension that it was still possible that he did or might know it, was sufficient to induce the advice which stopped this remonstrance, and all the unpleasant consequences that inevitably would have resulted. But Lord St. Vincent knew all about it. When the fleet got under weigh from Torbay, he was aware that the Divisional Admiral was not in the ship bearing his flag,—and his Lordship had matured measures, necessary in case he fell in with the enemy

without Ushant, as actually was fully expected; indeed, his Lordship was himself an eye-witness to the Admiral's return to his own ship from the frigate; but he refrained from mentioning it, or from otherwise noticing the circumstance than by a measure which should effectually prevent its recurrence, viz. this order, which was stigmatized as oppressive.

But here admonition again is felt; that, notwithstanding the assertion of an Admiral's absence is founded upon documents, and memoranda of the best authority, yet, considering the pen from which these statements now proceed, the support of proof is again necessary. A letter, therefore, is extracted from, otherwise, its more appropriate place.

Royal George, before Brest, 25th August, 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

As you know everything at your board, by hook or by crook, you probably are informed that an Admiral was left behind when we last sailed from Torbay,—half a dozen Captains, under the same circumstances, *has been* a trifle here! Yours affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

Now, let the reader only fancy the absence without leave of an Admiral and half a dozen Captains, had a general action then ensued!

The dissatisfaction which the Commander-in-chief felt with the despatch to resume their stations by the ships sent into port to refit, will be testified by the disapprobation which he expressed at their delays and dilatoriness. He at length found

it necessary to allowance them in time: and a ship sent in to be re-victualled and paid her wages, was not permitted to remain more than six days. But afterwards the Commander-in-chief found it necessary to infringe on even this short recreation. Orders were issued forbidding all the Officers from sleeping on shore. The command reached the Captains privately; the other Officers by a General Order.

It is scarcely possible to give an exaggerated representation of the displeasure and lamentation which this excited. Lord St. Vincent foresaw it; and nothing but the preservation of the Channel Fleet would have induced him to incur it. The order thus originated:—

It had been the excellent custom, when the ships arrived in port, for the Captains to give leave to as many of the most deserving of their crews as could be spared from duty, to go on shore for a day or two, as circumstances would permit; but the indulgence was always withholden from men who had not behaved well, or of whom there was ground to suspect the intention to desert. But at this period, the Captains of two or three of the largest ships in the fleet had gone so far as to give leave to their whole ships' companies, divided into three watches, to go on shore by watches, without discrimination, to the bad as well as to the good. The consequence was immense desertion. No less than eighty-three left one ship at one refit! and Lord St. Vincent clearly saw that in a short time his fleet would be unmanned.—Nor was that all: the complaints

and murmurings of the ships' companies, whose more prudent Captains did not give such indiscriminate indulgence, had reached his Lordship's ear, and were growing louder and louder every hour; and that too at a period when he was warned to be prepared against mutiny! Not a moment was to be lost; so his Lordship decided, that the only way to stop an evil of such portentous magnitude was to forbid the Captains themselves, and all their Officers, to sleep on shore.—Desertion stopped: and the order, as if by magic, re-manned the ships. No subordinate Officer, much less seaman, would now presume to ask leave of absence from his ship, when he knew the Captain himself could not obtain it; and therefore, to avoid far more painful and severe measures, to preserve his crews—in a word, to save his fleet, Lord St. Vincent took upon himself the frowns afloat, and the maledictions on shore.* Nor will this be an inappropriate place, to present a

* The families of the Officers of the fleet were then residing in great numbers at the ports of refit, and were certainly not among the least dissatisfied, nor the least talkative against this order. One lady, in full coterie, gave as a bumper toast, "May his next glass of wine choke the wretch!"—but their husbands too well knew their duty, and the man under whom they were serving, to dare to disobey.

They who have had opportunities of watching how diligently the French imitate whatever they perceive good in the British Navy, and what a fine efficient fleet they have formed, will not be surprised at reading that in the very next code of instructions for their Brest Fleet, which issued after this period, not only were the Captains forbidden to sleep on shore, but even the Admirals also!—*Victoires et Conquêtes*, 1804.

letter showing how he would privately expostulate with complainants of the severity of the measure.

TO MR. TUCKER.

Torr Abbey, November, 1801.

DEAR TUCKER,

In my conversation with Captain yesterday, he appeared so weak and ridiculous I could bring nothing to a decision: I wish you, therefore, in conversation with Mrs. to impress upon her mind that the duty of a Captain of a first-rate is incessant, requiring the most constant unremitting attention; and that the best First-lieutenant in the world cannot be a fit substitute for him. That, in short, his whole soul and body should be in it, — which, with his wife and family near him, never has been, nor can be; and that he sets a very improper example in all points, at this period; and unless both she and her husband can make their minds up to content in separation during the war, it would be very unwise and unjust, both to the service and to me, for him to delay for one day his intention, if such should still lurk in his or her mind, of retiring. Most sincerely yours, ST. VINCENT.

The little anecdotes of the manner in which the Commander-in-chief would see that both squadrons and individual ships were alert on their respective duties, might be cited endlessly: a very few must suffice.

One day, while the in-shore squadron was commanded by a Rear-Admiral, and a great part of the French fleet lay at anchor in Camaret Bay, either from bravado, or an attempt to steal out, three or four of their ships got under weigh, and stood towards sea. The Impetueux, Captain Sir Edward

Pellew, and another ship-of-the-line, gave chase. The Rear-Admiral made the signal to them of recal. But Sir Edward Pellew's promptitude had already attracted Lord St. Vincent's notice, and he immediately commanded the "annul to the signal of recal." In an instant the Impetueux again spread every yard of canvass after the enemy; but then, an action seeming probable, they were soon surrounded by their friends in Camaret Bay, and sheltered. Shortly after this, a correspondence took place between the "Chief" and that subordinate Admiral, respecting the depth of water on his station. To convince the Rear-Admiral that his remonstrance was groundless, the Commander-in-chief led the whole of the main body of the fleet considerably within him, sailed round him, and out again. Very soon afterwards the Rear-Admiral was "advised to go home and recruit his health."

In November, just before the fleet bore up for Torbay, on one very stormy day, the signal was made for Captain (now Vice-Admiral Sir Henry) Hill, of the Megæra frigate. When the Captain reached the Flag-ship the Admiral said, "Hill, you must go into Douarnenez Bay with despatches to , (who commanded the in-shore squadron,) and you will then have to join the squadron in Camaret Bay." At that moment the in-shore squadron had permitted themselves to be blown away from Douarnenez Bay, and were about nine miles on the weather-bow of the Flag-ship. The Captain pointed them out to the Admiral: "No, no," said his Lordship, "they are in Douarnenez Bay." — "He

wishes them there," whispered Sir Thomas Troubridge, "but sees them just as plainly as you do." Off Captain Hill was hurried with despatches to the Rear-Admiral, and they were orders which led him back again to his station at eleven o'clock that night, though it was blowing very strong from the south-west.

"The Commander-in-chief," spake a general order, "cannot suppose it possible that any Captain of a ship under his command is off the Quarter-deck or poop when any movement of the ship is made, night or day." These were not permitted to be words merely of form. It has been already said, that for the fleet to preserve the station which Lord St. Vincent assigned to it, to tack or wear during the night, was absolutely necessary. Every one will readily comprehend, that as these operations in a fleet, now of thirty sail-of-the-line, must always require greater attention and precision in darkness, the Admiral was desirous that his order for the presence of the Captains should in no case be neglected.

On one cold-blowing dark November night, with a great deal of rain, the Secretary, having heard that the order was given for the signal "to tack in succession," hastened to endeavour to persuade the Commander-in-chief to forego his practice of getting up and going on deck, being apprehensive that, as his Lordship, at the time, was very far from well, he might suffer severely from exposure to such a night of weather. On entering the Admiral's cabin the Secretary perceived, from the cot, that

his Lordship had arisen; and taking up a cloak, he hastily went on deck in search of him. On not perceiving him, he asked the Captain, Sir George Grey, if he had seen the Commander-in-chief? "No, not since dinner." — "But where can he be, for he is not in his cot?" and returning to the cabin-door, the Secretary applied to the Marine: "Sentry, have you seen the Commander-in-chief go out?" "No Sir." —"The other sentry?" "No Sir." — "But where, then, can he be, for he is not in his cabin nor the quarter-galleries? The clothes on his chair show he is not drest; the windows are all closed, and he is not on deck." In an instant the intensest anxiety arose for fear of an accident, of which Sir George Grey entreated not a word should be whispered till the ship had gone round, that the duty, in the darkness, might not be paralysed. Meanwhile the Secretary went silently round the decks; but search being just as fruitless, returning to the cabin, he threw up the gallery window and stepped out. And out there, at the further end of the gallery, was the old Admiral, standing in only his flannel dressing-gown and cocked hat, watching the movements of his fleet. He needed not to be told, that if it were known in the Ville de Paris that he was on deck, the silence in her duty would be information to the following ship of whose eye would be on her also, such close order did his fleet keep. The Secretary immediately presented the cloak, and urged his return to the cabin,—"for, in that state of health, to be exposed to such a night of weather was enough to cause his death."

"Hush, Sir! hush!" replied the Admiral: "I want to see how the evolution is performed in *such* a night of weather; and to know whether Jemmy" (Captain James Vashon, of the Neptune, the second astern of the Ville de Paris) "is on deck?" But the latter point being soon certified by Jemmy's shrill voice giving the usual warning, "Are you all ready forward there?"—"Ay," said the old Chief, "*that* will do;" and then the Secretary's entreaties were permitted to prevail.

But let us again turn from traits of rigour to those of approbation and benignity; the change will again be delightful.

A previously imposed rule, of not trenching upon the history of others, forbids to recount the proceedings of powerful detachments from the Channel Fleet, against more than one strong town on the enemy's coast; and this restriction is now the more willingly obeyed, because the violent party animosity of those days uttered very dissonant voices on the conduct of Officers whose mere rank, independent of their brilliant reputation, would exact at least a respectful silence here, from a Civilian, unless his subject absolutely demanded an opinion.

But the conduct of an Officer commanding boats seems exempt from this exclusion; and in referring to Sir Jeremiah Coghlan's capture of the Cerbére as one of the most dashing feats of gallantry of its kind which the British Navy has displayed, that distinguished Officer is entreated to pardon the inadequacy of the expression, in consideration that the liberty is taken only for the atoning purpose of

adding the testimony with which his great Commander-in-chief stamped the exploit.

But first, who is there not proud to recollect the bravery with which that Officer, whose name is an honour to any page, and whom Lord St. Vincent used to call "the little man with a big heart," the late gallant Rear-Admiral Sir Patrick Campbell, cut out the Dart? So, too, how Sir Edward Hamilton's dashing courage recovered the Hermione to the British Navy, despoiling mutiny of its trophy?—splendid boat achievements, which are now adverted to, because Lord St. Vincent, after presenting Mr. Coghlan with a sword value one hundred guineas in approbation of his contribution to such naval glories, thus also, in a single neatly-turned sentence, ranked his exploit with that of his predecessors, and associated all three with the fame of eulogy from that Chieftain, to whose superiority of judgment all men bear suffrage. "I did not,"—wrote his Lordship to the Secretary of the Admiralty,—"I did not think that the gallantry of Sir Edward Hamilton and Captain Campbell *could* have been rivalled, until I read the enclosed letter from Sir Edward Pellew," (which reported Mr. Coghlan's success,) "which has filled my mind with pride and admiration."

Most old sailors are aware, that the unfortunate party feeling which the Courts-martial on Admirals Keppel and Sir Hugh Palliser had created in the Navy, had, perhaps, tended to prevent any intimacy between the Chiefs of the Channel and Mediterranean Fleets; and the unexpected succession of

Lord St. Vincent to command in the Channel was viewed with a jealous eye by the Officers of the Royal George, which had borne Lord Bridport's flag. Lord St. Vincent endeavoured by many acts of kindness to remove this soreness; and when the Ville de Paris required to go into port to be paid and re-victualled, he shifted his flag into the Royal George, and, by his courtesy, soon became very popular there.

While on board this ship, he observed a remarkably fine boy, and noticed him to Captain Domett, by whom he was informed, that he wrote in the Secretary's office, and was a nephew of Captain Wilmot, who was promoted by his Lordship for his gallant conduct when First-lieutenant of the Sea-Horse, and afterwards nobly fell in the breach at Acre. Lord St. Vincent instantly called the boy to him, and asked him, whether his situation was his own choice, or whether he would prefer a more active life?—and the boy's eyes glistened with hope as he informed the Admiral, that his own wish had been to be a Midshipman, but that he had been placed in the office by his friends, who had no influence, nor means to enable him to afford a Midshipman's mess. Lord St. Vincent immediately sent for his Secretary. "Good Heavens, Tucker! here is the nephew of poor David Wilmot a common boy, and I find that his parents cannot afford to clothe him as a Petty-officer! Do you *immediately* send into port, and equip him in every respect for the Quarter-deck." This was of course done. Sir George Grey was requested to bring out the chest; and when the Flag returned to the Ville de Paris, the boy was

agreeably surprised at finding himself discharged into her as a Midshipman, and on going on board to find uniforms and a well-stored chest: and the present gallant Officer is entreated to pardon thus much being added of himself, that his whole life has been one of high credit to his patron; that he has since behaved so gallantly upon every occasion, as to have promoted himself to the honour and rank of a very distinguished Post-Captain.

It one day came to Lord St. Vincent's knowledge that one of the Flag-ship's crew, who bore a good character, had lost 6*l.*, by intrusting his clothes to be washed by a messmate without informing him that a bag containing the notes was concealed in the lining of the waistcoat. Lord St. Vincent sent for the man, who, on appearance, told his story in an artless feeling manner. His Lordship ordered him to take the notes to his Secretary, "who he was sure would be able to open them to his satisfaction." The seaman went to the Secretary, holding a nob of paper about the size of a nutmeg between his finger and thumb. "Here, Sir; my Lord says you know how to open these notes; I wish to God you may, but I don't think it." The Secretary at once seeing what he had to do, merely asked the amount, and said, "To convince you that I can, I will give you six others for them." As soon as he had his good notes, away the man tripped to the Commander-in-chief smilingly, with "Thank ye, my Lord; look!" (holding out the money,) "the gentleman has *changed* the notes! but I don't think he will be able to pass the others, whatever he may think of it."

When Lord St. Vincent promoted Captain Hill to the Megæra, a survey was ordered on the Purser's stores, and the Captain had to pay 50*l.* for what, on his own inspection, he did not think worth 10*l.*; and he accordingly begged leave to decline taking them. The Captain had occasion to go on board the Flag-ship. The Chief called him into his cabin, and said, "Hill, Bover* says you decline taking his necessaries."—"Yes, my Lord, they are valued to me at 50*l.*, and I would not give 10*l.* for them; for I certainly must provide a fresh supply."—"But, poor Bover!" replied his Lordship; "poor Bover! Hill, you *must* take them from him." He then requested a check for 100*l.* from his Secretary, and gave them to the Captain to pay for them, whispering in his ear, "Hill, your father and I were such friends, that we once shared the same purse." This was a command admitting no reply.

On one fine still afternoon on which a cutter arrived from England bringing letters to the fleet, shortly after Lord St. Vincent had received his despatches, before any were answered, or indeed all were read, his bell rang very violently, and the sentry was ordered to send the Secretary in haste. As soon as he entered, Mr. Tucker was desired to ascertain whether a good dinner for forty or fifty could be managed that day? and when that was answered affirmatively, Lord St. Vincent ordered the signals for the fleet to lie-to, and to invite all the Admirals and Captains to dine; "for," said his

* The former dauntless Lieutenant of the London, whom Lord St. Vincent had promoted for his intrepidity.

Lordship, "the cutter *must* return this evening; they will all wish to send to England by her; this will enable them to do so; a dinner in good-humour heals many a sore; besides, it will bring them all together, and I want to see them."

The dinner was one of the largest he ever gave in a fleet. As soon as it was over, addressing his guests, Lord St. Vincent said "that it then became him to make his apology for having invited them so abruptly; which was, that he had that afternoon received a letter from England which, he was sure, they would all feel it behoved him to answer without a night's delay, and that if he had replied, before he had acquainted them with the communication, that would be an insult to them all." He then took out of his pocket a letter of that day's bag, from a Mr. Thompson, to say that he had an "establishment at Paddington for the orphan children of seamen who had fallen in their Country's service; that hitherto it had been maintained by voluntary contribution; but that then the funds being completely exhausted, he was compelled to solicit his Lordship for a little assistance." Lord St. Vincent then reminded them, "that every individual, without exception, who was at the table, owed all his honours, his rank, and his fortunes, to the devoted gallantry of the brave men whose children were left destitute orphans. That he thought it was their and his bounden duty to contribute, according to their means, to the support of those whose fathers had sacrificed their lives in gathering honours, and fortunes, and comfort, upon

their Officers. That as he himself had most benefitted by the brave fellows, his own contribution ought to be largest; but that it need not be regarded as an example which any one present was bound to follow, beyond what he could afford." And then, proceeding from the junior, his Lordship personally solicited from each Officer a subscription, last of all adding his own, which was heard with great applause. The sum collected was very liberal. His Lordship and his Secretary retired for a short time, and then the cutter was despatched. The whole passed off very happily, and a day, well nigh dragged through in dull tedious uniformity, had suddenly become one of cheerful refreshing interest; every one left the ship in good-humour; indeed, an old Admiral has frequently told the author that he seldom if ever in his life, partook of more real pleasure, than in the unanimous and enthusiastic admiration of Lord St. Vincent's deportment and conduct throughout.

And let the imagination run over the varying events of even a sailor's life, and then contemplate the charming spectacle which had here been presented; to whom, this assemblage of Officers indulged in gratitude; for whom, they were doing their alms; and surely we shall agree, that not every day do incidents appear on a more befitting scene, the mighty line-of-battle-ship the Commander-in-chief's cabin; or select a more seasonable moment, the blockade of the enemy's port in face of the hostile fleet; or redound more honourably to the heart of the prominent individual, for

Lord St. Vincent's subscription was one thousand pounds!

That when the occurrence became known to the crews, thankfulness was audible and visible; and that the Ville de Paris' people, having dressed themselves in their best, went in a body to the Quarter-deck to express, through their petty officers,* their gratitude to their Commander-in-chief, it may be superfluous to say. But perhaps it is not so to add, that thus successful beyond expectation, Mr. Thompson was enabled to keep alive, even to extend his humane establishment, till it attracted the care and the provision of the Government; and that in such splendid efforts by individuals is to be hailed the origin of the Naval Asylum!

When the winter had quite set in, and its stormy gales rendered the constant maintenance of the blockade no longer possible, on the return of the fleet to Torbay, Lord St. Vincent obtained permission from the Admiralty to go to Torr Abbey to recruit his health, for by this time it was again seriously impaired; and in addition to former constitutional ailment, now a violent cough, which dis-

* The spokesman was the quarter-master Brown; and the author is in possession of a fragment of the slip of paper on which he conceives his father's memorandum of the man's speech must have been written, for it runs thus: "My Lord, the ship's company has heard how kindly you have thought of the poor children: my Lord, the Ville de Paris' will *sink*" — but there the paper is torn; yet surely it was a fine scene when those noble fellows approached their great Admiral, acknowledging his humanity to the orphans of others, and tendering their own readiness to die for their country.

tressingly convulsed his whole frame, and never again entirely left him, rendered him quite unable to remain at sea.

The residence was that of his Lordship's relative, Mr. Cary; it was also within the limit prescribed to the Officers from the sea-shore. During the Commander-in-chief's absence Vice-admiral Sir Henry Harvey was placed in command of the fleet; and our gallant sailors who served in it well recollect the violent gale which drove them off their station in January 1801, as well as that the French squadron, under Admiral Ganteaume, compelled by Buonaparte to put to sea, in weather in which a British line-of-battle-ship could not maintain her position, were all very nearly wrecked, and most of them totally dismasted. But further narrative of these matters appertains not to the history of Lord St. Vincent. For a time his Lordship was about to retire from the Channel Fleet; political changes in England having now paved the way to his appearance in a different service to his Country.

FROM LORD NELSON.

H.M.S. Foudroyant, off Monte Christi, Feb. 1, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

I thank you very much for your kind letter of December 15th, and order; my heart rejoices to hear you are so well recovered, and that there are hopes of your being em-

ployed in the home fleet, when our gentlemen will not find it so necessary, as it has been, to go into harbour to be refitted; but you will have an Herculean labour to make them what you had brought the Mediterranean fleet to. Peers and Members of Parliament *must* attend their duty in London; but the nation will be better taken care of by their being off Brest. You taught *us* to keep the seamen healthy without going into port, and to stay at sea for years without a refit. We know not the meaning of the word. The Audacious, Alexander, and others, have never seen an arsenal since they have been under my command. Louis, to his great comfort, has had a treat of shifting his masts, and stayed six weeks in harbour; but he sees not a port again, if I had the command, for the next year. Our friend Troubridge is as full of resources as his Culloden is full of accidents, but I am now satisfied that if his ship's bottom were entirely out, he would find means to make her swim. He must go home this summer, for he never can now go to sea, except for a fine passage, without being hove down; he is not at Malta; which place I hope time and perseverance will put into our hands. Lord Keith is now going with me from Leghorn (where I went to meet him) to Palermo and Malta.

Feb. 6th. Lord Keith has just got accounts, that General Fox is to send some troops for Malta. The King of Naples sends twelve hundred in our ships; therefore I hope this terrible long business will be brought to a close. I sincerely thank you, my dear Lord, for your good wishes for my return to England; that event hangs on those things which are not in my power to command, but at present I see no prospect of my return. I did not fail to present your kindest regards to Sir William and Lady Hamilton, and they rejoice with me at your recovery. May the Heavens ever bless you, my dear friend, and believe me for life your affectionate and obliged,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 5th May, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

I cannot express the disgust manifested by on his coming on board the Namur, on the 2nd instant; which I was the less prepared for, because I understood from your Lordship, and every person I have conversed with upon the subject during the last five years, that he had determined never to take a command-in-chief, and so I told him; and could I have conceived what was to happen, no inducement whatever would have prompted me to have deprived him of the succession, while at the head of a squadron he had served so long and brilliantly in; and I do assure your Lordship that I am ready to cede the command to him, if, upon his representations, which he told me were very strong, it should be judged fit to take measures to appease him.

The squadron, as far as I have yet seen, is in good order and temper, with a fair appearance of emulation. Some few of the ships are shorter of complement than I could wish them to be, for we must count upon a sick list of between twenty and thirty in each ship-of-the-line. The Ville de Paris wants forty or fifty able-bodied men to put her on a par with other ships of three decks; and if Blue-jackets cannot be afforded, I should be glad to have Marines, to whom, your Lordship knows I am partial;—the disposable men sent by the Mars, were properly distributed before I joined.

I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most faithful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 6th May, 1800.
8 o'clock, P.M.

MY DEAR LORD,

The public account of the state of the combined fleets in Brest, this moment received from Captain Keats, is so very satisfactory, that I judge it expedient to send the Joseph cutter (very much in want of a refit) with it immediately. Captain Keats, in a private letter, copy of which is enclosed, represents the gallant behaviour of one of his Master's mates, which, if he has served his time, I shall reward, by appointing him to act on the first vacancy of Lieutenant, in full confidence of your Lordship's approbation, promotion being the best incentive to enterprize. Believe me to be your Lordship's, &c.

ST. VINCENT.

TO ADMIRAL

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 6th May, 1800.

SIR,

You have taken a distinction which I do not subscribe to, and I wish to be understood to say that a universal opinion has obtained, that your determination was, not to take a command-in-chief, and no further. What change may have taken place since I was ordered to take the command of the squadron I cannot speak to; nor is it fit for me to name the persons I have conversed with, who were under the same impression. I am, however, persuaded you will, upon enquiry, find it was by no means confined.

With every desire to shew the respect and attention due to you, I must beg leave to decline any further correspondence upon a subject which has given great pain to, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, St. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS. — GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 10th May, 1800.

THE Commander-in-chief has very great pleasure in expressing the satisfaction he derives from the zeal and activity shown in the squadron he has the honour to command; and has simply to recommend keeping the columns in compact order when wind and weather will permit, which can only be done by increasing sail, in small proportions, the moment the ship is perceived to drop, and when the signal is made to tack or wear, more particularly in succession, by every ship clapping on as much canvass as the distance from the file-leader will permit, (and not to back, except to avoid an evident shock,) and by not standing beyond the wake of the leader before she begins her movement. The Officers commanding the Middle Watch are strictly enjoined to preserve close order at daybreak, to facilitate an immediate attack on falling in with the enemy, more especially on his coming out of port.

ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, May 13th, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am very much hurt by the manner in which the ships-of-the-line come to me, so very deficient in water: their consumption, both in port and at sea, is much greater than it ought to be, and I am circulating my opinion upon this subject, not judging it expedient to issue an order till I have tried the effect of the aforementioned hint. It is evident that the stowage is reduced very much below the capacity of many ships, for the express purpose of short cruizes, and to avoid being sent on foreign service.

The necessity we are under of keeping under sail incessantly to preserve our position, prevents our completing the ships with water and provisions from those ordered into Cawsand Bay; it therefore is of the utmost importance that those in port should be filled up before they are ordered to join.

Upon the whole, I have more to approve than I had reason to expect, and there are many very good fellows who will perform everything required of them.

Yesterday was very favourable for the enemy to have made a push: he is either not ready, or our being close in with Ushant at an early hour in the morning prevents him from moving. Believe me to be

Your Lordship's, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE FLAG-OFFICERS. — MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 14th May, 1800.

IT is my direction that you cause the enclosed order to be communicated to His Majesty's ships named in the margin, with directions to the Captains to cause the same to be publicly read to the ship's company of their respective ships, with such admonitions respecting their future conduct as they shall judge fit. ST. VINCENT.

TO EDWARD MARSH, ESQ.

Captain of H. M. S. Temeraire.

By the Earl of ST. VINCENT, Knight of the Bath, Admiral of the White, and Commander-in-chief of a squadron of His Majesty's ships and vessels employed, and to be employed, in the Channel Soundings, or wherever else His Majesty's service may require.

HAVING taken into my most serious consideration the sentence of a Court-martial on James Riley, a seaman belonging

to His Majesty's ship under your command, for the base and ignominious crime of desertion, which merits the severest punishment, and which, from the determination I had fixed to inflict it in the most exemplary manner, nothing could justify my pardoning in this instance but the circumstance of my having recently been appointed to the command of the squadron, and being naturally desirous of entering upon it with an act of oblivion for past offences, in confident hopes that it will operate in preventing a crime, never to be overlooked in future.

You are hereby required and directed to remit the punishment which the said James Riley has been so justly adjudged to receive, and to restore him to his duty, with such admonition respecting his future conduct as you shall judge fit. Given on board the Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 14th May, 1800. ST. VINCENT.

TO J. H. WHITSHED, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 14th May, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

A difficulty occurs in carrying the sentence of the Court-martial upon James Riley into execution, for, circumstanced as we are, a punishment from ship to ship would have a harsh appearance; upon the whole, therefore, if he is not a very bad subject, I feel disposed to remit the punishment, as an act of grace upon my taking the command of the squadron; at the same time, I see the necessity of putting a stop to desertion, if possible, by a strong arm, doubting very much, however, whether one hundred and fifty lashes, inflicted in the ordinary way, would produce much effect.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, in Torbay, 19th May, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

The elements have not been propitious in my first essay, for at one period, yesterday, I had great apprehensions that some of the ships would have lost their lower masts, and I believe nothing saved them but leaving each ship to the judgment of her own Officers; and those arrived here are in a much better state than I expected.

Your Lordship may rest assured that every exertion shall be made to put to sea the first favourable moment, and I have the honour to be,

Very faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 20th May, 1800.

WHEN the squadron is at anchor in Torbay, a Captain of a ship-of-the-line, beginning with the junior, is to command at the watering-place at Brixham, taking to his assistance his Commanding Officer of Marines, two Subalterns, one Sergeant, one Corporal, and fifteen of the most sober, orderly, and attentive Marines in the ship. Five sentinels are to be posted on the most prominent stations, to prevent straggling, or liquor being brought to the boats' crews employed in watering, carrying down fresh beef, and other incidental services. The reason of appointing so many officers and few soldiers is, that the posts may be visited frequently, and that the men off duty may be looked after. The Captain may take a Lieutenant of the ship, and as many Midshipmen as he thinks fit, with him; and he is not to quit his command until regularly relieved by the next in seniority, which is to be as soon after eight o'clock as possible every morning. ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris in Torbay, 21st May, 1800.

SIR,

After acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, signifying the direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that instead of keeping with me thirty sail-of-the-line, I should retain such a number as from the apparent state of the enemy's fleet in Brest I should think sufficient to prevent it from putting to sea, in addition to the number necessary for performing the services mentioned in your letter of the 8th instant, I beg leave to submit to their Lordships, whether it would not be good policy to make demonstration of thirty-four ships-of-the-line, if I can collect that number, before the wind enables me to get under weigh, and afterwards detach to Cawsand Bay, or to this anchorage, in conformity to their Lordships' orders, according to the intelligence I may receive. Such was the plan I had in contemplation before the receipt of your letter, and I am the more confirmed in it because of the reports spread in this quarter of the squadron having suffered the most serious disasters, which will doubtless reach France, and may cause all the ships at Brest to be put into a state of equipment.

I will not fail to despatch a vessel to Admiral Kingsmill at Cork, with advice of my departure from hence.

I am, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 5th June, 1800.

THE Commander-in-chief being very desirous of becoming acquainted with the First-lieutenants of the ships under his command, the next time a general signal is made they are to answer it. ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off the Black Rocks,
10th June, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Although I do not feel any apprehension, from the enclosed communication Sir Thomas Pasley has very properly made, which no doubt your Lordship is acquainted with, it is wise to take precautions; the more so as such a rumour has been in circulation during the last eight months; I therefore submit orders I judged it expedient to issue off Cadiz, wishing that such of them as may be approved should come forth, in some shape, by the authority of the Admiralty, and that the ships very short of complement should be completed with Marines. There never was a fairer occasion for such a measure, arising out of the scarcity of seamen.

The execution of one man, aware of an intention to mutiny, and not revealing it, will have a million times stronger effect than the like punishment inflicted on a score of actual mutineers. I have the honour to be, &c.

ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR THOMAS PASLEY, BART.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 10th June, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am very much obliged by your communication of the relation made by Captain Harlock's servant. The crew of the Pompee is very badly composed, and I am not surprised at the propagation of any doctrines from that quarter, and I have learnt from Captain Wolsely, that his people are, for the most part, Irish of the very worst description.

It is also certain, that before I was appointed to command this squadron, anonymous letters in greater numbers than since the mutiny, had been received at the Admiralty, complaining of ill treatment from Officers. Nevertheless, from all the information I have obtained, the major part of the crews of the squadron seems well disposed. The good men feel the comfort and advantages they enjoy, and do not permit the miscreants to insult and oppress them, as they formerly did. Being immediately under the eye of Admiralty authority and jurisdiction, I cannot take upon myself to advise your taking any measures to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the conversation held by the persons in question; you have no doubt apprized Lord Spencer of it, who having much experience of these transactions, will, with the assistance of his confidential advisers, decide what is proper to be done on the occasion.

The licentious conversation of the wardroom Officers, and in some instances at the tables of Officers of high rank in the Navy, has occasioned infinite mischief, for it soon diffuses through the ships, and circulates through the fleet. Everybody appears tired of the war; and the abominable drunkenness of the men, both in port and at sea, works up the passions, and produces evils that were formerly unknown. A squadron of any size abroad, may be kept in order, even though the Commander-in-chief is thwarted by the principal Officers under his command; but in the narrow seas the case is widely different, for the assumption of any powers not clearly defined in his Commission and Instructions, may subject him to reprehension, which the pride of military character cannot digest; and from the little knowledge I have of the conduct of

it appears he took no kind of responsibility upon himself, in cases of the greatest exigency, which renders my situation the more critical. I will thank you for any further insight you obtain into this very serious matter, and such suggestions as may occur to you. My maxim is, to keep

the squadron in constant movement. We never bring-to. For the purpose of communicating, the correspondence to and from England is generally conveyed in cutters attending on the squadron, and the ships' boats are never permitted to continue along-side the Ville de Paris a moment longer than is absolutely necessary, when they are called aboard.

You will add to the obligation I feel, by facilitating the watering and victualling the frigates I have occasion to send in, the Captains of which will in future be directed not to meddle with their rigging; best done at sea in summer. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 12th June, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Captain Gore watches the motions of the enemy with a zeal and ability not to be surpassed, and conducts those enterprizes so ably, that I persevere in my intention to send the Boadicea off Ferrol, and the Clyde along the coast of France, Spain, and part of Portugal, to enable Mr. Serres to complete his views. The conduct observed to the Captains of the frigates had very nearly broken them down. I never saw either till the other day; yet I am bound, by every principle, not to allow men who have performed such eminent services to be deprived of a fair proportion of the few good chances within my sphere.

Believe me to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 12th June, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been witness to so much want of skill and judgment on ships passing each other, during this war,

particularly when one has been lying to, that I never do put the squadron to that hazard, but upon the most pressing occasion, shortening sail only, or deadening the ship's way, when Officers are coming on board. There are other *weighty reasons* for keeping the squadron in perpetual motion, which I will explain when we meet. I feel the disgrace of this rencontre between the Marlborough and Centaur, as you do, and from the system of enquiry pursued by the Admiralty, I conclude there will be a very grave one instituted upon this occasion, as in truth, there ought to be. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR J. B. WARREN, BART. K.B.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 14th June, 1800.

SIR,

I lose no time in forwarding to you the extract of a letter from Plymouth, which has been transmitted to me by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and which I desire you will communicate, in confidence, to Captains Lord Henry Paulet and Stopford, that timely precautions may be taken to defeat any machinations which may be carrying on on board their respective ships. I am preparing to issue a general secret order on the occasion, which will recommend the re-adoption of a Masters' Mates' berth abreast the main hatchway, on the lower-deck, and one for the Masters-at-arms abreast of the bilts, on the opposite side, and that the Marines be berthed close aft to the gun-room netting, without any seamen mixed with them, and that there may be as little intercourse as possible in future with the ships either at sea or in port.

I have the honour to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 14th June, 1800.

SIR,

I am sorry to inform you that the devils in this and the north squadron have been at work ever since you were joined by Lord Keith; and discovery has been made that they intend to carry this plan into execution the next time we go into port; a circular letter of instructions to the Captains of line-of-battle-ships is preparing, in which they will be directed to resume the Masters' Mates' berths abreast the main-hatchway on the lower-deck; and the Master-at-arms' berths abreast of the bilts on the opposite side; the Marines in ships of two decks to be berthed close aft to the gun-room netting, and no seaman to be mixed among them. All the communication by boats, both at sea and in port, to be discontinued, except when the duties of the King's service requires it. We shall not be ready to issue them in less than two days, as the whole are to be written by Mr. Tucker. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 15th June, 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

The mutinous disposition of the seamen in Lord Bridport's squadron was never even smothered. I could relate such atrocious proceedings in some of the ships as would make your hair stand on end. I have received constant information during the last nine months, of a plan for arresting the fleet, when ordered to sea, and to set up claims to an extension of rights touching provisions, prize-money, &c.; and the ships whose Captains were canting,

and declaring their people to be orderly and well-disposed, have ever been in the most alarming state of anarchy and licentiousness; the Captains of the Forecastle granting liberty to go on shore, and the Lieutenants set aside; crimes of the deepest dye connived at, or passed over; in short, a seeming determination not to see, or notice any of the admonitions, even among some of your Lords, who, God knows, are very unfit to advise in any measure beyond the selection of men for Greenwich Hospital, not having had capacity to govern a ship-of-the-line in their best days. I feel much for Lord Spencer, who merits everything from everybody, and does wonders.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 16th June, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Nothing would produce a better effect at this moment than the promotion of Captain Bover,* and continuing him in active employ, for his incomparable behaviour in the hour of severe trial, and being the son of a very gallant officer and worthy man.

Botts, the Corresponding Society man, who was executed on board the Princess Royal, conveyed to me, by the clergyman who attended him in his last moments, that the only atonement he could make for the heinous crime he has committed, was to warn me against the machinations of , whose oaths of allegiance and professions of loyalty were never to be relied upon, and entreating me to keep a constant vigilant eye upon them; the Scotch, when bad, are worse than the Irish. Believe me to be, my dear Lord,

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

* The former dauntless Lieutenant of the London.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 15th June, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

The enemy appears so petrified by the change of system in approaching and scouring the coast, that the convoy of victuallers, afraid to attempt getting into Brest, is gone from Conquêt Bay to the eastward, with the exception of a few small vessels, which have hauled close to the batteries.

With respect to the impending internal storm, I have nothing to add, except a wish that the merchants of London, Bristol, and Liverpool, would republish their resolutions not to ship a seaman who does not produce a well authenticated certificate of his good behaviour during the war, and send a number of copies to me.

I hope the circular letter I have written will be approved by the Board. I am sorry to observe that no precaution appears to have been taken in any ship of 's squadron, and I very much doubt whether those I have directed will be acted upon by many with energy; I will however, do my duty, regardless of the sarcasms I am subjected to.

Pray let me have the Courageux, and all who served with zeal and attachment under me in the Mediterranean; Captains Darby, Brown, and George Hope, would be of great use on the approaching occasion, instead of the old women, some of them in the shape of young men, I am burthened with.

Believe me to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.

(Most secret and confidential.)

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, June 13th, (issued 17th,) 1800.

SIR,

Having received information from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that conversations and correspondence have been held by seamen belonging to some of the ships of the squadron and of ships serving in the North Sea, highly derogatory to the discipline of the Navy and the safety of the state, importing that another mutiny is in agitation, and to be carried into execution at a given period; I think it my duty to apprize you thereof, that you may be constantly on your guard, more particularly when in port, against the machinations of wicked and designing men; to counteract whom the main-hatchway berth, on the larboard side of the lower-deck of each line-of-battle-ship, is to be restored to the Masters' Mates, and the Masters-at-arms to be established, abreast of the bitts, on the starboard side. The Marines on board ships of three decks to be berthed on the middle-deck, and in ships of two decks, close aft to the gun-room netting, without any seamen intermixed with them; and such other precautions taken as may best defeat the horrible crime in contemplation, by a vigilant attention to the carriage and manners of those suspected of disaffection; and I desire you will report to me the apparent disposition of your ship's company, and from time to time any change you may observe in their behaviour.

All communication from one ship to another by boats is absolutely necessary to be discontinued, both at sea and in port, as far as the duties of His Majesty's service will admit. I am, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CLARENCE.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 18th June, 1800.

SIR,

In consequence of a short conversation I have had with Sir John Warren, I do not lose a moment to assure your Royal Highness that I consider myself highly honoured by the wishes You have expressed, to be attached to this squadron; and in the event of its taking place, nothing shall be wanting on my part to give proof of the high respect and attachment with which I have the honour to be

Your Royal Highness' very dutiful and obedient servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 18th June, 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

You should order the men who held the traitorous correspondence to London, and put them in separate cells, under the direction of my friend Ford; nothing short of that will bring forth the truth.

If your philosophy can point out better means to prevent any escape of ships from Brest than I have adopted, I shall be glad to receive it. I am of opinion that the stock-brokers about the 'Change, and some of your wights, are near upon a par in fighting battles and blockading ports.

God bless you, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO ALEXANDER DAVISON, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 19th June, 1800.

SIR,

Surely my excellent friend Lord Nelson could not have been informed of the conduct I directed Mr. Tucker to observe in all his proceedings with you and Mr. Booth, or he never would have written the letter, a copy of which you enclosed to me. From the commencement of the transaction * I doubted my claim, and was actuated entirely

* A lawsuit having at this period been carried on between Lord St. Vincent and Lord Nelson respecting some prize-money, which ultimately was decided to belong to Lord Nelson; and some observations proving entire ignorance of the circumstances having appeared, as if Lord St. Vincent endeavoured to withhold from Lord Nelson his due; it may be as well very briefly to state all the material outline of the transaction.

Lord St. Vincent having despatched a frigate on the cruise in which she made a prize; afterwards, by Admiralty permission, left the Mediterranean command, and had arrived in England before the capture; but his Lordship still retained the pay, title, and table-money of Commander-in-chief, and as such made official appointments and promotions, and did not resign his commission till after the prize was taken. When his Lordship quitted the Mediterranean, the command devolved upon Lord Keith; and upon Lord Keith's departure to the Channel Fleet, upon Lord Nelson, who was the senior Officer in the Mediterranean when the captor, a frigate belonging to that station, took her prize. Lord Keith, though at the moment of the capture actually serving in the Channel Fleet, memorialised the King in council to share flag-prize-money with Lord Nelson. Upon which Lord St. Vincent and the other Mediterranean Flag-officers had no alternative but to present separate counter memorials. To all of them the reply was, This is a subject for the decision of a court of law; and thus

by the judgment of other men, not lawyers, who were by no means unfriendly to Lord Nelson; although what passed between you, Mr. Booth, and Mr. Tucker, must be fresh in your memory. At my desire, the latter has collected all the material points, which are enclosed; and I have only to add, that I would forfeit all I am worth rather than have a dispute with Lord Nelson; at the same time there is something due to the profession we are both in.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

an amicable suit being inevitable, Lord St. Vincent found himself driven into a proceeding at law, against the very man, of all others in the world, with whom he would have most avoided the bare appearance of dispute.

But his Lordship's legal adviser's opinion was, that it was a very doubtful point (and so it afterwards proved), and an important one, which ought to be settled for the service; and that the King in council having pointed out the course, if his Lordship did not pursue it, it would be said that he had abandoned the service from apprehension of the expense of the suit. Proceedings therefore being thus instituted, Lord St. Vincent commanded his Secretary to afford every possible assistance to Lord Nelson and to his legal advisers, and to pay every farthing of Lord Nelson's expenses, howsoever incurred, if the decision were in Lord St. Vincent's favour. At the trial, a special verdict was found; upon the argument on it, so refined was the point of law, that the Court of Common Pleas was equally divided. At the prayer of Lord Nelson's counsel, one of the judges in his Lordship's favour withdrew his opinion; and the judgment, which thereby followed against Lord Nelson, was removed into a higher court, where it was reversed.

To him who is capable of appreciating lofty minds, it must be superfluous to say that this never for a moment caused the very slightest unpleasantry between these great Officers; to another, it will be sufficient to add, that the uninterrupted harmony of their correspondence, continued till within a few months of Trafalgar, attests it.

TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY, ETC.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 20th June, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

What our great *sea-gods* are doing about this important communication they have made to me, I know not; nor am I well informed how they treated the former *disgrazzii;* but, sure I am, if they do not "take the bull by the horns," the Country is undone. I shall be very glad to converse with you upon this subject when the elements will permit.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 21st June, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Your Lordship is informed by this time that I have issued a few orders in a secret circular letter, sufficient to put the Captains on their guard, without giving offensive alarm to the people. The order relative to the duty to be performed by the Marines in port is certainly necessary; and if the Board does not think fit to give it, I shall; whenever I am, by stress of weather or otherwise, compelled to anchor.

Your Lordship probably knows that the following toast was given by a Captain when sitting at a numerous table on board the Royal George: "May the Mediterranean discipline never be introduced into the Channel Fleet:" and neither nor any person present, as far as I have heard, expressed the smallest disapprobation, although, I do know, that some were shocked at it. After which, I appeal to you whether the authority of the Admiralty should not appear, on all proper occasions, in support of your Lordship's very faithful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 22nd June, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

You cannot conceive how few men are qualified to command ships-of-the-line as they ought to be. Some, whose talents are rated very high by those who are not intimately acquainted with the Navy, never were able, at any period of their lives, to regulate and govern six or seven hundred men, of the description our crews are composed of, although a few of them have been distinguished as Captains of frigates. The and are in this predicament, yet the commanders of them as worthy, in other respects, as can be, and Captain a good astronomer. I have the honour to be, ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 24th June, 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

I gave you a very hasty opinion of the compilation of the signals issued to the fleet under the authority of the Admiralty, for they really are a disgrace to the British Navy, and must be improved. Whoever claims the merit of them, I pronounce neither seaman, soldier, nor officer. God help us if we continue to be guided by such Neptunes! Yours most affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR J. B. WARREN, BART. K.B.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 25th June, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

These d—d villains I will do my best to bring to the yard-arm; and if there is any vigour in Government,

I will be responsible for the safety of the ships committed to my charge. The surrender of Genoa is a great object; but Berthier is in possession of all the posts and forts on the Po and Adige; and, I fear, old Melas is no match for him. Our movements on this coast have brought the First Consul from Paris, and there is certainly a great ferment in various parts of France, which gives them much alarm. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 26th June, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

The disposition made by Sir Edward Pellew for the descent on a certain spot, is the most masterly I ever saw: your Lordship shall have it by the next conveyance; the full employment Mr. Tucker has, in copying every letter and document from that quarter, and writing the public letters upon the subject thereof, not allowing of its being ready for this. Although the naval command in Quiberon may appear too important for a Captain, I shall not divest Sir Edward Pellew of it, unless I am ordered so to do; feeling a thorough conviction that no man in His Majesty's Navy, be his rank ever so high, will fill it so well. Your very faithful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 27th June, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

The admirable example my friend Collingwood has set, in getting the Barfleur filled up and paid in so short a time, will, I hope, produce some effect on the Captains of frigates, whose dilatory conduct in port annoys me beyond

expression. All the married ones have their wives there, which plays the devil with them; for although the measures I have taken imply a very strong disapprobation, hitherto no advantage has been derived from them. Believe me to be your Lordship's very faithful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO COMMISSIONER FANSHAW.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 28th June, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

What was dropped by my young friend, at breakfast, was the only justification he could set up for the frigates; and though it did not make the smallest impression upon me, I judged that your being in possesssion of the plea could do no harm. Admiral Collingwood has set such an example, that, I think, they will be ashamed to remain longer than a week in port, or ten days at the utmost.

I was not aware that any defects were sent to the Navy Board, except those of a ship requiring to go into dock. Who can be so good a judge of these matters as the resident Commissioner? God help us, if the equipment of the fleet depends on the goodys and gossips of a wide-spreading Board. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN , H.M.S. .

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 29th June, 1800.

SIR,

I have such damning proof of what I urged to you the other day, that, out of the regard I personally feel for you, I return your letter, trusting you will not address such another to, Sir,

Your most obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL PAYNE.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near the Black Rocks,
1st July, 1800.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

Although I am endeavouring by degrees to introduce the discipline of the Mediterranean squadron into that of the Channel, my maxims are not yet quite so rigid as they have been, and probably are at this moment described; but *I will not be deterred from doing my duty* by the ill-humour of individuals, or even by a combination formed out of it. On every occasion I shall be happy to give proof of the regard and esteem with which I am

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY.

(Secret and confidential.)

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 2nd July, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am sorry to tell you that a note of Huskisson's to Nepean, which was enclosed by the latter, as a guide to my conduct, convinces me that nothing can be worse than the state of the Austrian armies, and that Carnot and Buonaparte have proved themselves to be the most able planners and executioners of the age.

I have also received further proofs of the conspiracy among the seamen,—a swearing-in at Haslar Hospital has been discovered. If the Duke of Portland will permit some of these devils to be confined in separate cells, under the direction of Mr. Ford, the very marrow of this scheme will be got at. Much drunkenness, and some insolence, with a slack manner of doing the duty of this ship, has appeared evident to me since we left Torbay; some filthy habits have also been contracted by the evil communication which has happened on shore.

I assembled all the Captains of Marines yesterday, under the pretext of giving them directions for serving the campaign on shore, but really to exhort them to keep up the pride and spirit of their detachments, to prevent any conversations being carried on in Irish, and to advise that a subaltern visit the Marine berths when the people are at their meals; to call the roll once a day, at least; and to observe the same system as to dress, economy, and exercise, as is practised in the Ville de Paris; and I will thank you to do the same with the Commanding Officers of the Marines in the respective ships under your orders.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near the Black Rocks,
2nd July, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Divine service is more regularly performed in this squadron than I ever observed before, and Mr. Morgan does deliver most excellent discourses; but we have some *roué* parsons, who really should not hold their situations. One was convicted of selling spirits, at five shillings a bottle, to the seamen of the ships, some months ago, and let off without punishment, — a beautiful trait of my friend , if he knew it. I have ordered a detailed report to be made to me of the circumstances, which I shall transmit to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and your Lordship shall have a copy.

I know how some of the Captains expounded the Articles of War, particularly those under the head of Mutiny; but the are so incorrigible, nothing short of the severest discipline will keep them down. We have half a dozen ships so ill governed that something serious will

happen, if I cannot bring about a change in the economy and management of them. I am going on the piano, *but will be obeyed*, though I see a disposition in some to traverse me. Your Lordship's, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS. — GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 2nd July, 1800.

EXPERIENCE having proved that most of the infectious diseases in His Majesty's ships arise from pent-up foul air, and that none is so noxious as that which proceeds from the human body, the following regulation is to be observed in future on board every ship under my command: the times when the bedding is aired, and the number of hours it is exposed each day, to be entered in the Log-book.

The bedding of the respective ships' companies of the fleet is to be shook and aired, if possible, once a-week during the summer months, and as frequently as possible in winter as the weather will permit; and a report to be made on the back of the "State and Condition" of the times the bedding was aired, and how long it remained exposed to the air each day since the last account. ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, between Ushant and the Black Rock, 2nd July, 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

I assembled all the Officers of Marines on board the Ville de Paris, under the pretext of instructing them as to the uniformity of dress, exercise, and economy, preparatory to their landing, but really to give them some sense about keeping a watchful eye not only upon their own men, but upon the seamen, and I directed that a subaltern should

visit them at their meals. With the exception of two, they appeared well disposed, and extremely attentive to what I said; they went away well pleased with their reception, and certainly with an impression that they are to serve on shore.

I am introducing, by degrees, wholesome regulations, some of which are not relished by a very few; I shall, nevertheless, go on, regardless of animadversions. Nothing would gratify Troubridge more than for the Atalante to be attached to us; and I should be well pleased to have Captain Griffiths, but, for the reasons I gave you before, I shall not ask. Your very affectionate, ST. VINCENT.

TO HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, before Brest, 3rd July, 1800.

MY LORD,

The drunkenness and profligacy arising out of a total dereliction of discipline in some few of the ships of the squadron I have lately been placed at the head of, have contributed to keep alive the alarming disposition to mutiny, which shook the foundation of the Empire three years ago; and it is painful to reflect, that the licentious conversation of the Ward-room Officers (and, I fear, of some in higher stations) has occasioned much of the mischief: but there is no offence of so dangerous a tendency as the selling of spirituous liquors to the people, whose daily allowance keeps them in an inflamed state.

Mr. , late Chaplain of the , having been detected in the practice of it during the command of my predecessor, and let off without trial by Court-martial, and having been guilty of petty larceny (as I am credibly informed) when Chaplain of the under the command of Captain (now Rear-Admiral) , I feel it my indispensable

duty to lay the enclosed copies of Correspondence and Reports before your Grace, that this unworthy member of the Church may not meet with encouragement. I have the honour to be, with the highest respect and veneration,

Your Grace's most obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL WHITSHED.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 3rd July, 1800.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

A thousand thanks are due to you for the pains you have taken to despatch the ships which were necessarily sent into Cawsand Bay. Without such powerful aid, all my endeavours to fulfil the wishes of the Cabinet would be vain: I shall astonish you when the joins, with the pitiful miserable subterfuges, to counteract my efforts here; happily, they have produced no material effect, and the actors are shrinking into nothingness.

Sir Charles Cotton will succeed you in the painful employment of *negro-driving*: the abominable repugnance to exertion under the existing circumstances is difficult to imagine. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 5th July, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

The worthy old carpenter of the Neptune, William Touranac, has at length given in; and the merit of James Wilson, carpenter to the Pompée, and his exemplary conduct during the mutiny, having been made known to me; I have, without ever seeing him, appointed him to act until the pleasure of the Board is known; and I do intreat of your Lordship to use your influence, that he may receive

a warrant for that specific ship, which will do more good than any reward conferred upon him out of this fleet.

I wish to point your Lordship's attention to a circumstance which struck Captain Grey and me at the same moment, while walking the quarter-deck together, a few days after we last left Torbay:—David Davison, the seaman of the Princess Royal who was nominated by Botts to command the fleet after I was hanged, and whom I did not think fit to dispose of anywhere but in the Ville de Paris, happened to be at the weather-helm; and the standing orders are, that the helmsman during the day shall not only be well dressed, but particularly mindful of their attitude at the wheel, that, from the very bad steerage of this ship, no accident may happen. Davison, who had done his duty with remarkable diligence until this moment, was the reverse in all points, hanging upon the wheel in the most slovenly and careless manner, filthy in his dress, and manner of spewing out his tobacco spittle, and frequently looking in my face with a very unusual effrontery. I was determined that he should not perceive that I noticed his garb and mien, and did not even mention it until the next day, and I had scarcely uttered a sentence, before Captain Grey said he had remarked the very same circumstances. We have a few of the most audacious villains unhung, who have lately shown themselves; but the admirable police of this ship keeps them down, and they are trembling with apprehension, for they are too sharp not to perceive the measures taking, against their wicked devices. Your Lordship's, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS, AND COMMANDERS.
GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 6th July, 1800.

The Commander-in-chief is very much surprised to find, that when the ships under his command go into port

for the express purpose of filling up with water, there is the smallest space in the hold left unoccupied; and he requires in future, that every possible means be used to stow even to a barrel; and no pretence of room to stow away chests, or other accommodation, at the whim of the Master's Mates of the hold, will be admitted.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS AND COMMANDERS.

GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 6th July, 1800.

IN addition to my order of yesterday, the necessary demands for sails, cordage, topmasts, yards and spars, are to be made the instant the ship, arriving in Plymouth Sound or Cawsand Bay is moored, that I may know where to attach the blame if she is not at sea in a reasonable time, which *never* ought to exceed a week; unless a mast is to be shifted, and in that event, not more than ten days.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS AND COMMANDERS.

GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 6th July, 1800.

IT is my direction that the ships of the fleet always keep their convalescent men employed picking oakum, in order to have a sufficient quantity ready for caulking the ships.

ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 4 A.M., 6th July.
Wind W. by N.

MY DEAR LORD,

The importance of the question you put to me, touching the feasibility of an attempt upon Ferrol, either by regular approaches, or *coup de main*, requires an immediate answer, and I despatch the Dolly cutter, with this my decided opinion, that Ferrol is, of all Ports of Spain, the least vulnerable. Cadiz or Carthagena, if Sir R. Abercromby has the force public rumour reports, is certainly within his grasp,—the Canary Islands completely so.

I have the honour to be your Lordship's, &c.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 8th July, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

Be so good, after causing the standing orders you will receive herewith to be entered in the books of the squadron, to endeavour to get hold of one Captain Gore's cutters, and send them into him, for unless his ships reeve crowfeet, they will soon be without main-top sails, tacking so oft as they do. I know I shall be criticised for descending to the minutiæ of crowfeet, topsail, and lower lifts; but regardless of that, whenever I see *general* ills likely to arise, I *will* apply a remedy: and you can have no conception what benefits have arisen from Mediterranean discipline, so much deprecated by my predecessor, and some of his adherents.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 12th July, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

If what the enclosed paragraph imports to have been the reason why a sentence of death was not passed on a flagitious mutineer be true, the members who composed the majority of that Court-martial ought to be removed from the command of their ships, and never more employed; for the circumstance of *character* should, in that instance, have operated in a direct contrary ratio, example being the only principle upon which either capital or corporal punishment is justifiable in a civilised country, and the execution of a worthless vagabond does not produce it.

Your Lordship's, &c.

ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near the Black Rock,
16th July, 1800.

DEAR SIR,

I know and respect all your feelings about the Captains of the Naiad and Alcmene, yet I cannot possibly relax an iota upon their subject; for although discipline and subordination seem to be given up by
it never shall be said that the smallest dereliction from the essentials has been made by,

Dear Sir,

Your very sincere and obedient servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 16th July, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Permit me to remind you of Captain Bathurst, whose modest merit makes him a bad advocate in his own cause. I hear Captain Talbot (of whom I think highly) is soon to be removed to a larger frigate; and should the Eurydice not be promised, nothing would gratify me more than Captain Bathurst's being appointed to her, and attached to this squadron. I wish him to have a ship with a quarter-deck, because we mean to put half-a-dozen of our young people under his care, few officers being so capable of instructing youth as he is.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest esteem and regard,

Your Lordship's, &c.

ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL PAYNE.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 17th July, 1800.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

Pray explain to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales that I am not allowed to make a Lieutenant; it would astonish you to hear a recital of the lessons of humility I have been subjected to since I was invested with this command; at the same time I beg you will make my most respectful duty, and assure His Royal Highness that Lieutenant Mason shall receive every protection in the power of

My dear Sir, &c.

ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, July 22nd, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

We have established an excellent school-room here, and our studies proceed as well as possible. Mr. Ponsonby was a little disappointed in not accompanying Captain Grey, and pouted yesterday; but is now perfectly reconciled, and enjoys the prospect of a cruise with Captain Bathurst, who has a happy knack of managing boys and attaching them to him.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 22nd July, 1800.

SIR,

I beg leave to submit to the superior judgment of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the propriety of sending to me, in order that they may be solemnly read to the respective companies of his Majesty's ships of this squadron, copies of all the sentences which have been recently passed on the mutineers, wherein they have been adjudged to suffer death, as the very best effect was produced by promulgating similar sentences to the Mediterranean squadron when under my command.

I am, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO DOCTOR BLANE.

H.M.S. Royal George, near the Black Rocks, 24th July.

DEAR SIR,

If you will give yourself a moment's reflection, you must see that to call upon Captain in the manner

you propose, would be a crimination of him, Captain . Lord Spencer is acquainted with the whole; and if Mr. is not removed, I will bring a direct charge against your board; for the said is a butcher of men, and I impute the deaths of all who have been lost to the King's service in the Pompée to him.

Your instructions have not reached me; when they do, I will give you an undisguised opinion upon them.

Very sincerely your humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL ST. VINCENT.

London, 23rd July, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Your Lordship's letter of the 5th instant gratified me much, and the Chamberlain of London received equal pleasure in being called upon for what he terms his imperfect address, on delivering the sword voted by the Corporation of the city of London, during my mayoralty, in testimony of the high sense of the service rendered to your country by gaining, at a most critical moment, the most brilliant, and important, and instructive victory which ever graced the annals of history.

Enclosed will be found a copy of that address: I would to God every seat in the House of Lords were filled by men in possession of such testimonials.

The account your Lordship has been pleased to give me of the high condition and discipline of the fleet under your command warms my heart; for, half a seaman, and wholly an Englishman, how can I but rejoice at such a force, and under such command, at an hour big with events so deeply interesting to the civilised world.

That your health may be continued equal to the arduous duties you have to discharge, and an occasion again offer

for displaying those talents you so eminently possess, is the most cordial wish of your Lordship's most faithful humble servant, BROOK WATSON.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN CLARK'S SPEECH.

MY LORD ST. VINCENT,

I have the honour to offer to your Lordship the unanimous thanks of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council assembled, for the very important, splendid, and unparalleled victory obtained by the squadron under your Lordship's command, over the fleet of Spain, on the 14th February, 1797, tending to the security of Great Britain, by the defeat of the junction of two powerful armaments, destined for its invasion at a most critical juncture; and adorning in a most luminous degree the page of our Naval History with an event which will proudly display to futurity the nautical science and resistless (*sic, qu. irresistible?*) bearing of British seamen.

And as a testimony of the high esteem the Court entertains of your Lordship's public services, and of the eminent advantages which you have rendered to your country, I have the honour, by their direction, to present your Lordship with this sword.

When the first abilities in the most august assemblies in the world have confessed that your Lordship's transcendent merits in that action have far outstript the utmost powers of their eloquence, it would be highly arrogant in me to attempt a panegyric. But your Lordship will not decline accepting from an individual those grateful sentiments which animate every loyal and British heart; not content with obtaining a victory, which (without derogating from the numerous instances of heroism exhibited in this eventful war) stands unrivalled, your Lordship has trained for your country a host of naval worthies, and the world is

unanimous in its acknowledgment that for the heroes of the Nile we are indebted to the school of Jervis.

The persevering malice of our enemies will not allow your Lordship that repose to which you are so justly entitled; but your Country is confident that their perseverance will tend to their own confusion, and, under the protection of the God of battles, will add fresh laurels to those which so eminently adorn your Lordship's brow.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 25th July, 1800.

A RETURN is to be made by the respective ships (as they may have occasion to send boats to the Royal George) of the remains of lemon-juice and sugar in charge of the Purser, and also what quantity of lemon-juice supplied from the Hospital the Surgeons have remaining. The above returns to express the time for which it will serve the number of men on board.

By the Admiral's directions, WM. DOMETT.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL O'HARA.

H.M.S. Royal George, between Ushant and the Black Rocks, 25th July, 1800.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

I am sure it will give you pleasure to know that this fleet, which when I came to it was at the lowest ebb of wretched and miserable discipline, is now above mediocrity; and will in three months, if we are not driven into Torbay by tempestuous weather, be to perfection. We keep the combined fleets completely in check, by anchoring a small

squadron of ships-of-the-line in the Iroise, near Parquette Rock (turn to your map), and by a squadron of frigates and cutters, plying night and day when the weather will permit, in the opening of the Goulet, between Camaret and Bertheaume; two ships-of-the-line with a cutter and lugger are placed off the Bay de Fontenac, and are generally at an anchor in Hodierne Bay during an easterly wind; one of the line off Isle Groa, to block L'Orient, and Sir Edward Pellew's squadron in Quiberon Bay, with three regiments encamped at Houat; what they are intended for I know not, as our expeditioning seems likely to end in vapour.

Your most affectionate ST. VINCENT.

TO MR. ALDERMAN WATSON.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 25th July, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have the satisfaction to inform you that this squadron is so much improved since we left Torbay the last time, I scarcely know it to be the same. I took the command four months ago; and when I can lay hold on Ben. Hallowell, the Captains Darby and Hood, with a few more of my Mediterranean friends, and have purged it of a few who are fitter for Greenwich Hospital than the service they are now engaged in, I have no doubt of bringing it to as great perfection of discipline as a fleet can be, *serving so immediately under the Admiralty Board.* In making this last observation, I do not mean to say that I do not receive powerful support from Lord Spencer, whose character and conduct I admire and esteem; but boards are addicted to jealousy and tenacity, and ever suspicious that one is treading upon their toes.

The disposition to mutiny, which has never been extin-

guished, is kept down in all the ships where anything like discipline is maintained; and the support I give to the Officers who are capable of governing a ship's company in these days, with a few wholesome regulations, and absolute orders, will not only keep this fleet quiet, but healthy; so that the sentiment given at 's table, on board the Royal George, "May the Mediterranean discipline never be introduced into the Channel Fleet," is at least not prophetic.

Believe me to be, my dear Sir, yours most truly,

ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD SPENCER.

H.M.S. Royal George, between Ushant and the Black Rock, 26th July, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

I need not describe to your Lordship the merit of Sir James Saumarez, which cannot be surpassed; in a conversation I accidentally had with him last evening, I learnt that his ambition had been much disappointed in not being created a Baronet; and he thought I was wanting in not pointing to this object in the letter I had the honour to write your Lordship by him, after the battle of the Nile, where he was second in command; and he also conceives that your Lordship led him to hope this mark of approbation of his services would have been conferred upon him: may I therefore trespass upon your indulgence to request you will bring it about, if possible, as nothing can gratify me more than that Officers who have so signalized themselves under my auspices should be amply rewarded.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 28th July, 1800.

IT having been found by recent experience that the hog-styes under the forecastle are a nuisance, and extremely injurious to the sick berths, they are immediately to be removed, and the place where they stand to be purified.

ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Royal George, 30th July, 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

For God's sake give Lord Spencer a hint not to allow his Neptunes at the Board to interfere in ship-*building*. The Courageux is a disgrace to the art. At this moment we are standing by the wind in a line of battle, between the Black Rock and Ushant, the water as smooth as a mill-pond, under three single-reefed topsails, mizen, and fore-topmast staysail, and could with ease carry every sail on the ship; thus circumstanced, the miserable Courageux is obliged to lower her ports between the mainmast and chesstree, while every three-decker carries the whole high out of the water; and what makes the thing still worse, she is deeper in the water by eleven inches than the designer calculated she ought to sail at. Imagine to yourself a ship eight feet broader upon the fore-part of the quarter-deck than the Defence, and six inches narrower at the water-line, and you have the Courageux. I feel for Sam. Hood, who must be disgraced if the enemy gives us battle; and the whole money spent in building and sending her to sea might as well have been given to the *Chouans*.

Yours most affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD KEITH, ETC.

H.M.S. Royal George, before Brest, 3rd Aug. 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Our intelligence from France says, Buonaparte is coming to Brest to force the combined fleet, and to give us battle,—*nous verrons.* They had better have done it sooner; for, besides having got the squadron into a healthy and well-arranged state as to the interior, our movements are improved to a degree that is really surprising for the time; but, to effect it, I have been obliged to have recourse to the Mediterranean discipline, so much deprecated by

. Heartily hoping that your health has not suffered by the unaccountable reverses in Italy, believe me to be,

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

Royal George, off Ushant, 4th August, 1800.

SIR,

I did not think the gallantry of Sir Edward Hamilton and Captain Campbell could have been rivalled, until I read the enclosed letter from Sir Edward Pellew, relating the desperate service performed by acting-Lieutenant Coghlan, of the Viper cutter, on the 29th July, which has filled me with pride and admiration; and although the circumstance of his not having completed his time in His Majesty's Navy operates at present against his receiving the reward he most ambitions, I am persuaded the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty will do all in their power to console him under his severe wounds, and make a minute for his promotion the moment he is in a capacity to receive it.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

On the turned up corner of the above are the following Minutes:

"8*th August.* Let copies be prepared immediately for the Gazette, of the account of the action.

"Memorial to the King, to authorise their Lordships to direct the examination of Mr. Coghlan touching his qualifications to serve as a Lieutenant, notwithstanding he has not served the usual time to qualify him for a Lieutenant.

"Own receipt, — approve in the strongest terms, — and inform Lord St. Vincent of the Memorial, and that when he shall have passed his examination their Lordships will promote him to the rank of Lieutenant."

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Royal George, near Ushant, 4th August, 1800.
Wind N.W.

MY DEAR LORD,

I shall not trouble your Lordship with a word more than is contained in the enclosed private letter from Sir Edward Pellew on the subject of the intrepid Coghlan, except to say (not out of ostentation, but to prevent the City, or any body of merchants, making him a present of the same sort) that I give him a sword of one hundred guineas value.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS. — GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 5th August, 1800.

IT is the Commander-in-chief's directions that a Report be made, signed by the respective Captains, whether or

not the hog-styes are taken down, and the place they occupied made into a Dispensary for the use of the Surgeons, agreeable to his order of the 21st July.

(WM. DOMETT.)

TO SIR J. B. WARREN, BART., K.B.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 8th August, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

As soon as you have regulated everything at the advanced post, and taught Captain to "know his Lord God from Tom Bell," make the best of your way to me; leaving our cousin Sotheby with Commodore Knight, who will make him a pilot, surveyor, draughtsman, engraver, &c. &c. in a very short space of time. I hope, at furthest, your stay at the Black Rock will not go beyond to-morrow morning. Yours most sincerely, ST. VINCENT.

TO ANDREW THOMPSON, ESQ.

H.M.S. Royal George, before Brest, 11th August, 1800.

SIR,

I seize the earliest moment to acknowledge your obliging letter of the 6th instant, and to convey my thanks to the Patrons, Presidents, and Governors of the most noble Charity that ever was instituted, for the very handsome manner in which they have received the contribution of my mite; and I also request you will make my respectful duty to His Royal Highness Prince Frederick, and express my gratitude for the very high honour conferred on me by being placed on a list composed of such illustrious personages, and assure His Royal Highness that I will endeavour to merit this great distinction by exerting all my faculties

and purse in support of this divine institution. I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

I have directed my agents, Messrs. Cooke and Halford, in Beaufort Buildings, to pay 1000*l.* into the office in Lichfield Street, Soho.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Royal George, 13th Aug. 1800.
Before Brest.

MY DEAR LORD,

When your Lordship prepares the Bill "To Amend and Explain our Articles of War," attention should be had to the extreme difficulty we find in getting evidence to convict in cases of sedition, mutiny, disobedience, and contempt to superior officers; for, unless the Captain or Commanding Officer, at the time these offences are committed, take down the depositions in writing before creditable witnesses, the bloody threats of the Irish always operate upon the minds of those on whose testimony conviction can be effected; and the punishment for prevarication (bordering on perjury) is so slight, that those who wish to get ashore rather seek than avoid it, — a jolly life for two years in the Marshalsea being the utmost extent of punishment for this atrocious offence.

Formerly we used to swear the Irish Roman Catholics upon the sign of the Cross, and a New Testament, with cuts of the Holy Evangelists, was placed upon the table. When before Cadiz, our hair-splitters voted this practice to be illegal, and discontinued it, although I have seen several instances where a word of evidence could not be extorted from them until the oath was administered in the form above-mentioned, (*vide* M'Arthur's "Treatise on Naval Courts-martial," in the case of the Narcissus, — note in

page 104,) after which the whole truth came out, under an apparent agony, even of drops of sweat pushing each other from the pores, and a trembling of every limb. Between these refinements, pusillanimity of character, and love of popularity, in which is a most prominent figure, many a delinquent has been acquitted, or adjudged to receive trifling punishment, who ought to have been hanged. We have another description of men, whose vanity disposes them to make a display of knowledge in proportion to their ignorance, and talk a great deal of nonsense at Courts-martial; takes the lead amongst these.

Confinement in solitary cells would be the best punishment for prevarication, when bordering on perjury; and I wish to know whether wilful perjury at Courts-martial is indictable at common law: corrupt perjury is not readily made out with us.

Most faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Royal George, before Brest, 14th Aug. 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

A Captain commanding a squadron in this department has no authority, the Captains having lived together "Hail, fellow, well met!" and there having been neither discipline nor subordination in the squadron, no service can be carried on with energy, unless there is distinction of rank in the Commanding Officer. Sir Edward Pellew has been treated with the most abominable disrespect by two Captains your Lordship little suspects; and if they do not make the *amende honorable* I will subject them to a Court-martial. Others in this squadron were offended because Sir Edward found it necessary to hold his head up. In short, my dear Lord, the adding sixteen or eighteen Admirals to your list,

to get at the only men fit to command at the advanced post, which I will avow if necessary, will meet with universal approbation; particularly from the Representatives of the People, who are always ready to vote money for the Navy, even when it does not deserve so well as it has done, and, I am confident, will continue to do so during the whole of this eventful war.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS. — GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 15th Aug. 1800.

WHEREAS ships are frequently detained in port to be paid, in consequence of their pay-books not being received by the Commissioner; it is my direction that the ships of the Channel Fleet do, in future, regularly make up their pay-books, for the six months *to be paid* at the expiration of eleven months, and send them on board the ship in which my flag may be flying, in order that they be sent to the Navy Board, *examined, forwarded from hence*, and received at Plymouth by the time their pay becomes due.

ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 16th August, 1800.

SIR,

Your letter, this moment received, has not contributed in the smallest degree to alter the opinion I had formed of your having determined to avail yourself of this influenza to get the again into port. The most serious charge I make against you is, the savage rudeness offered to Mr. Baird on the Quarter-deck of the yesterday, wholly unbecoming the character of her commander, and

particularly reprehensible in the desponding state in which your improper conduct has placed the crew of His Majesty's ship under your command. If you continue to court inquiry in the style of the letter I am replying to, it will come sooner than you are aware of. I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 18th August, 1800.

SIR,

You are a young man, and rather over-hasty in applying for an investigation or trial, on the representation Sir Edward Pellew thought fit to make. If you will condescend to state what Captain Pierrepoint, with great propriety, did, your character and conduct will stand as high as they have ever done: but the mere sound of Court-martial has the same pestilential effects as a suspicion of female chastity. I am, Sir,

Your humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE FLAG-OFFICERS, CAPTAINS, AND COMMANDERS.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 20th August, 1800.

GENERAL ORDER.—When the squadron is in Torbay.

No Lieutenant, Officer of Marines, Warrant, or Petty Officer, is permitted to sleep on shore, unless he is on guard, or other indispensable duty, which prevents his getting on board; and permission to go on shore is to be limited between sunrise and sunset; and no Officer, of whatever rank, is to go farther from the margin of the bay than Paington or Upper Brixham.

The respective Captains of the squadron are strictly

required to report, in writing, under their hands, to the Commander-in-chief, or the senior Flag-officer for the time being, any breach of this most positive order.

ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Royal George, before Brest, 25th Aug. 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have great deference for your judgment, but the *suaviter in modo* will not do here. I have tried it in vain. A resolution was entered into, aided and abetted by great names, that I should not be permitted to interfere with the interior economy of the Channel Fleet. The first effort was made by a Captain, who must be nameless, because he has repented of his sins. The declaration he publicly made was, that "I might direct what I pleased, but he would adopt what he thought proper."

Your Lordship has placed me in a very arduous situation. So long as I can maintain the post to your satisfaction, and to the benefit of my King and Country, I will; but not a moment longer. Yours most faithfully,

ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Royal George, near Ushant, 28th August, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

While timber for the construction of large ships, is on my mind, I suggest to your Lordship, that the Imperial Provinces bordering on the Adriatic, will furnish any quantity of excellent timber, which may be loaded at Fiumi, and other anchorages in that neighbourhood, and Sir T. B. Thompson assures me, that at Sierra Leone any quantity of teak timber may be had.

Your Lordship's very obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Royal George, near Ushant, 30th August, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

The valiant and highly distinguished Officer,* who has the honour to present you with this, will not, I am sure, be long without receiving a proof of that justice which your Lordship renders to the pre-eminent in arms.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS AND COMMANDERS.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 31st August, 1800.

REGULATIONS respecting boats, to be observed in future by the Channel Fleet, or any detachment thereof, while in Torbay, and under the command of Admiral the Earl St. Vincent.

In order to prevent in future the unfortunate accidents that too often happen, by boats carrying an improper proportion of sail, of which there is a very recent and fatal instance in a cutter belonging to the Edgar, it is my direction, that no six-oared cutter, pinnace, yawl or jolly-boat, be allowed to have more than one sail in her, (which ought to be placed very far aft, or nearly amidships,) or an eight, ten, or twelve-oared more than a foresail, and mizen, and the respective Captains are desired to give positive orders to their Officers to be very careful and prudent in carrying sail in the launches, which, for despatch, may be permitted to have all their sails; and, as very dreadful casualties have occurred at Brixham, by part of drunken boats'-crews falling over the rocks, some breaking their limbs, and others losing their lives, it becomes my duty

* Sir Richard Keats.

to enjoin, in the strongest manner, the Captains, and Officers in the fleet, to give those poor unthinking fellows as little opportunity as possible of committing irregularities, by never sending a boat on shore unnecessarily; and it is my positive direction that no boats remain on shore after sunset, unless the public service absolutely requires it; nor are they to be suffered at any time to wait for Officers on leave, servants at market, &c., &c.; but a time must be fixed for the coming off, to which it is expected they will be very punctual, and meet the boats on her landing, whose time for waiting on shore, on such occasions must be limited to a quarter of an hour, at the expiration of which time the Petty Officer sent in the boat is strictly required to put off, even if not one of the Officers he is sent for, should be come down.

The necessity of this regulation will, on a moment's reflection, be obvious to every Officer, as he must be well aware of the distresses occasioned by boats' crews wandering about the beach, and the temptations, that are constantly thrown in their way, to sell their clothes for inflammatory spirits, very frequently causing *desertion*, which probably never would have entered their imagination had they not been idly, and improperly left on shore.

ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL WHITSHED.

H.M.S. Royal George, 2nd September, 1800.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

From the intelligence lately received, our Neptunes are of opinion, that the combined fleets will be forced out the latter end of the present French month, when the First Consul is to be at Brest, surrounded by his satellites. Certain it is, that fifteen thousand of the best troops of the line have marched into Brest, from the neighbouring districts,

and all the seafaring men on the adjacent coast have been seized upon, and conducted to Brest, like felons, something like the manner in which you make volunteers in Ireland. Thus circumstanced, I will not do so much violence to your feelings as to order you into Cawsand Bay. I am ordered to call in all my outposts. Yours most truly,

ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Royal George, before Brest, 5th Sept. 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

I shall consider it as an act of great importance to the state, and of kindness to me, if you will take a favourable opportunity to state to his Lordship, the impossibility of governing a large fleet, in times like these, while the subordinate Officers are encouraged by patrons at the Admiralty Board, whom I can compare to nothing else but the orators in ancient Rome, who took up the cause of every discontented and factious person who presented himself at the Forum. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Royal George, near Ushant, 8th Sept. 1800.
Wind W. by N.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

Although I continue very stout, and am at present able to go through more fatigue than any Officer in this ship, setting aside the wear and tear of responsibility, it cannot be expected that I am to keep the sea for ever. I neither want to go to London nor Bath, but I wish to be authorized to live ashore at Torr Abbey, during some part of the winter. The Careys are my relations, and I feel no difficulty in setting myself there for a time, having the

Bay constantly in my view not far distant from the new hospital, and in every other respect handy for all purposes of command. I just throw out this to you, that when the winter disposition is made, there may be no difficulty about me. Yours most affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD SPENCER.

H.M.S. Royal George, in sight of Ushant, 12th Sept. 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

The Thetis Swedish frigate had a main-mast from us at Gibraltar, the winter before last, and I had an opportunity to observe the very extraordinary thrift, and rigid economy of the Officers and men of that once renowned country. Amongst other useful lessons, I gained one, the form of their tops, which are in two equal halves; and Captain Echolm, who was a thinking man, assured me, he never knew them rise, or that any accident had ever happened from their being in that form; the advantages of which are incalculable. I mentioned this to one of our surveyors, who, either from the prejudice your Lordship so justly remarks on, or other causes, did not give himself the trouble to seek the smallest information about it.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 12th Sept. 1800.

IT is my direction, that the respective Captains do cause their boatswains' store-rooms, wings, &c., to be perfectly cleared, and an exact amount taken, under the immediate inspection of the First-lieutenant and Master, of *all* the rope on board, *whether on charge or not;* a report of which,

expressing the size and quantity, is to be made to me, signed by the above Officers, the first favourable opportunity. This return is not demanded with a view to pass a censure on the boatswains, or to take away any part of the cordage, but solely for the purpose of putting the Admiral in possession of a knowledge of his resources, in case of accidents from an action with the enemy, or the fleet being disabled by the elements. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Royal George, off Ushant, 12th September, 1800.

THE Commander-in-chief highly disapproves the obstinate perseverance of the in backing her main and mizen topsails when the signal is made to tack or wear in succession; and this has frequently happened when her top-gallant-sails and stay-sails have been set; and it has given the Admiral great concern to see this slovenly practice imitated by a ship ably commanded, which has recently joined the fleet; it ought to be the especial care of the Captains, Lieutenants, and Masters of His Majesty's ships to study the rate of going of the ships they serve in, with that of their file leader, and govern themselves accordingly.

ST. VINCENT.

TO JOHN LLOYD, ESQ.

H.M.S. Royal George, near Ushant,
13th September, 1800.

MY DEAR LLOYD,

The *mal entendu* between Captain and me has been the *amantium iræ*, and we are much better friends than ever. You perhaps don't know that uttered the following ejaculation at the table I am now writing upon, before most of the Admirals and Captains of his squadron: "God forbid the Mediterranean

discipline should ever be introduced into the Channel Fleet." After this there was a kind of tacit engagement among the Captains, that any interference of mine with the interior economy of the respective ships of the squadron should be resisted. This being the anniversary of the glorious achievement and death of my friend and school-fellow General Wolfe, I expect a number of Captains to dine with me, and Sawyer has promised to make one.

Yours affectionately, St. VINCENT.

TO THE COUNTESS SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, before Brest, 15th September, 1800.

MADAM,

The very uncommon merit of this ship's company in resisting the wiles of the mutinous spirits in the Channel Fleet, and the blandishments and revilings of the courtesans at Plymouth and Portsmouth, calls for some mark of distinction; and I intend to give silver medals to the petty officers, and bronze ones to the seamen and marines; and if your Ladyship will have the goodness to furnish a design and motto adapted to the occasion, I will employ the most eminent engraver to carry the work into execution immediately. I have the honour to be, with the highest respect, your Ladyship's devoted and obedient servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 16th September, 1800.

THE Commander-in-chief is extremely concerned to have occasion to observe that several ships lately sent into Cawsand Bay to replenish, have wantonly sent hoys laden with water away, although they came in pursuance of the demands made by the Pursers of those ships, which is not

only a breach of the Captains' instructions, but a direct disobedience of the Admiral's orders; and it is very painful for him to remark that this has happened in three ships bearing flags. ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 17th September, 1800.
(Wind S. by W. with moderate and fair weather.)

MY DEAR LORD,

Since my letter of this day has closed, the appearance of wind has dispersed, and I believe we shall pass this change of moon at the equinox quietly; nevertheless it becomes me, in the situation I stand at this critical period, to suggest to your Lordship any ideas for the good of His Majesty's service, which should occur, and I wish to receive your opinion whether it would not be proper to give provisional instructions to Sir James Saumarez, under secret seal, not to be opened until the event happens; that in case I should be compelled to seek refuge in Torbay, and the combined fleets get out before I can return to the rendezvouz, he should in that event push for Cadiz, with the eight ships-of-the-line stationed between me and the Goulet; for I shall have force sufficient to protect England and Ireland without counting upon his eight sail.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, three leagues N.N.W. from Ushant,
17th September, 1800. Wind S.S.W. blowing strong.

MY DEAR LORD,

In your new arrangement of naval laws and regulations, I hope the First-Captain will be exempted from Courts-martial; for if he is an efficient man, he ought always to be stationary on board the Commander-in-chief's ship. Your Lordship's very faithful, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, Ushant, bearing S. by E. twelve leagues, 23rd September, 1800. Squally weather, wind N.W.

MY DEAR LORD,

does not stand the work at the advanced post with the firmness I had expected; whence it is evident that the man who faces a Frenchman or Spaniard with intrepidity, does not always encounter rocks and shoals with the same feeling; would to God that the promotion had taken place, that I might get at Captain Thornbrough. I have the honour to be your Lordship's, &c.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, Torbay, 26th September, 1800.

THE Commander-in-chief highly disapproving of a practice which has long prevailed in the naval service, of the Purser's issuing a greater quantity of spirits and wine to individuals than the stated allowance, does most positively direct that this breach of good order and regulation be discontinued; and the respective Pursers of the squadron under his command are hereby forbid, at their peril, to serve out more than the authorized allowance to any person, or upon any pretence, and to pay no debt whatsoever of provisions in kind.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, Torbay, 28th September, 1800.

IT is the Commander-in-chief's positive order that each ship of the squadron under his command keep, at all times, a sufficient quantity of oakum, ready picked, to caulk her completely.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, Torbay, 28th September, 1800.

THE Commander-in-chief signifies to the Captains of the ships under this command, that in future when they have any thing to ask of, or to represent to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, he requires that the application be made through him. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, Torbay, 30th September, 1800.

THE Commander-in-chief has this morning seen with astonishment that five Lieutenants had left their boats they were sent in on duty, contrary to his orders. The Captain of the Guard at Brixham has directions to put any Officer under arrest who leaves his boat hereafter.

T. TROUBRIDGE.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL ORDER.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, Torbay, 4th October, 1800.

IT is expected that the Surgeons and Surgeons'-mates of His Majesty's ships under the orders of Admiral the Earl of St. Vincent are never without having their pocket-case of instruments about their person, whether on board their respective ships or on shore, either on duty or pleasure.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, Torbay, 8th October, 1800.

THE Commander-in-chief does not lose a moment to express his highest approbation of the conduct of all Officers comprising the ward-room mess of H.M.S. Formidable, with the exception of for their meritorious conduct in bringing to light the atrocious conduct of the Lieutenant of that ship; and the Admiral avails himself of this occasion to charge all the Lieutenants of the fleet under his command to be very circumspect in their deportment and language; and he trusts that if any seditious expressions be made use of in the ward-rooms or elsewhere, they will instantly be made known to the Captain.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—MEMORANDUM.

Ville de Paris, Torbay, 10th October, 1800.

THE First-Lieutenant of H.M.S. the having, in violation of the principles of morality, decency, and good manners, entertained a woman of ill-fame from time to time on board that ship, the Commander-in-chief does positively forbid the introduction of any woman of ill-fame into the ward-room of any of the ships under his command, and he does hereby reprimand Lieutenant for his scandalous behaviour on that head.

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, at sea, 13th October, 1800.

CONFIDENT as the Commander-in-chief is that many consumptive cases might be prevented, and others mitigated by timely application of flannel next the skin in catarrhs, coughs, and common colds, he most seriously exhorts the Captains of the ships comprising the fleet under his command to inculcate this doctrine in the minds of their surgeons, who, some of them from caprice and perverse opposition to every wholesome regulation, greatly neglect this important duty. The moment any patient is described in the sick-list as labouring under the above-mentioned complaints, the Captains are enjoined to enforce the wearing flannel-shirts or waistcoats next the skin, and to see that it is strictly carried into execution, and that the Purser is always provided with adequate slops for that purpose.

ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, near Ushant, 14th October, 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

I have no objection to the correspondence of the whole world being conveyed under cover to me, with the exception of that which passes between Puisne Lords of Admiralty and subordinates of the fleet under my command, and I hope in future no such letters so sent will compel me to write to you as enclosed.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

A hint to your clerks will remedy what I will not endure.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

(Enclosure.)

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, 14th October, 1800.

SIR,

Having positively forbidden in public orders any surreptitious correspondence upon the individual subject of any ship or relative to the fleet, between members of the Board of Admiralty, and the Officers of the fleet under my command, so derogatory from the discipline and subordination thereof, I cannot submit to be the vehicle of such correspondence; I therefore return the letter to . . . which came under cover of the despatches I received to-day.

I am, &c. St. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN , H.M.S.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, before Brest, 20th Oct. 1800.

SIR,

If you will condescend to consider deliberately the letter you had the indiscretion to write to me, you must see the impropriety of it: at the same time, I am too candid not to acknowledge that it was the Dispensary, not the sick berth, which your predecessor had fitted up with neatness and propriety, and which has been shamefully neglected: the sick berth was not in the state it ought to have been; and the ulcered patients were allowed to sleep among the people below, when it must have been known that ulcers are infectious. The whole, however, is now buried in oblivion; and I am persuaded I never shall have occasion to make another remark to your disadvantage.

I remain, Sir, very much your humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO DR. BLANE.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, in Torbay, 28th Oct. 1800.

DEAR SIR,

My cough has increased considerably since the cold and moist atmosphere returned. The first week, before Brest, was mild and airy, insomuch all the catarrhal complaints gave way, mine among the rest. At present my head is loaded, and I cannot speak or draw breath without producing a cough which shakes me to the centre: except during the guard-mounting yesterday morning, I have kept close in the after-cabin, which is as warm as possible without fire, but I am confident another cruize would finish me. Happily, Lord Spencer has communicated the real state of my health to the Board, and I am indulged with the permission I asked to reside on shore, in the vicinity of Torbay; and I intend to remove to Torr Abbey, (which commands the anchorage, and is a well-sheltered delightful situation in all respects,) as soon as I can arrange matters for the next in command. Mr. Baird is indefatigable in his attention to every ship in the fleet, as well as his own, and gains proselytes hourly amongst his brethren, with the exception of a few M.D.'s. I wish to God you would prohibit that piece of vanity amongst the surgeons of the Navy, who, the moment they obtain a diploma, think themselves above the most ordinary and most useful parts of their duty, play on the flute and at backgammon the whole day, and make out their journals from Cullen and other medical authors, which gives them a reputation with your Board without the smallest title to it.

Very sincerely your humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN BROWN.

Torr Abbey, 30th October, 1800.

MY DEAR BROWN,

The Admiralty have at length found out what I have told them over and over again, that you are one of the very few men capable of commanding a ship of war as she ought to be in these times. What Lord Spencer will do further for you I know not, but you will never want a staunch friend in me: and it is upon the cards that I may be in a situation one day or other to prove that my professions are not windy words.

You shall have the best man this fleet affords for a Master; and if you can bring proof against any man, or number of men, who have seditiously declared they will not be drafted, their destiny shall be very soon settled.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO WILLIAM BARKER, ESQ.

Torr Abbey, 8th November, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

I agree with you, that Lord Spencer is the fittest of all men to direct and control this essential measure. Unhappily for him and the Country, he has been beset either by artful, designing, selfish naval advisers, or by ignorant and presumptuous ones, and at the Navy Board corruption reaches very high. His Lordship has, by the most indefatigable labour and industry, acquired such an extent of knowledge both in the theoretic and practical parts of the department, that, with the assistance of Nepean, he will be able to conduct the business without the assistance of any other person, which is a great blessing to him and to us all. First Lords of the Admiralty, on their entrance into office, resemble princes, are surrounded by flatterers, and

seldom learn the true character of their subordinates. I have, to the utmost of my power, endeavoured to put Lord Spencer in possession of every knowledge I have of men and things, and I have gone farther than I ever did with any other man in office.

I am, with the most perfect regard and esteem,

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN

Torr Abbey, 9th November, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

A few sheets of copper off a frigate's bottom is not a sufficient ground for remaining a day in port. The service is in such a contemptible state at home, it really makes me quite sick. What would have become of us in the Mediterranean, had it been so there?

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN , H.M.S.

Torr Abbey, 11th November, 1800.

SIR,

I submit to your judgment and feelings whether, after the very narrow escape you have had of losing your well-earned reputation, you ought to hazard it a second time by sleeping out of the . Very sincerely

Your humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Torr Abbey, 13th November, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

It is absolutely necessary that Captain should be removed from the command of the . He cannot govern his ship's company, is continually making frivolous excuses for non-performance of his duty, and ap-

pears at all times in a wretched state of imbecility, speaking of him as commander of one of his Majesty's ships.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO COMMISSIONER COFFIN.

Torr Abbey, 15th November, 1800.

MY DEAR COFFIN,

Those who are constantly watching over the passions of men in power, and taking advantage of them, will find no difficulty in cutting your throat and mine. Seven-eighths of the Captains who compose this fleet (subtracting from the number those who served *long* under me in the Mediterranean) are practising every subterfuge to get into harbour for the winter, and encouraging their carpenters to an exposition of defects, &c. &c. Troubridge's patience is almost exhausted, and he exclaims most feelingly against the degeneracy of our profession. It serves, however, as a spur to his labours; and he is caulking seams, fishing masts, and finding resources to meet every occasion, so that *our oakum is not picked in vain*, and we have demanded sixty barrels of pitch from Plymouth Yard, to keep it in the seams. I am at my wit's end to compose orders to meet every shift, evasion, and neglect of duty. You have a copy of the last enclosed, so that you see I am not upon velvet. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR HYDE PARKER.

Torr Abbey, 17th November, 1800.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

The principle on which the squadron acts, with the wind easterly, is to wear the sternmost and leewardmost first, which we are pretty expert in the practice of, even during the night, so as to be within a couple of leagues off Ushant at daylight in the morning. This is the more

necessary when the flood makes early; and if it flows strong, you will find much shelter between Ushant and the Black Rocks during the day; and when at a greater distance, the communication is well kept up by the inner advanced squadron at anchor between the Black Rocks and the Porquette, and the outer, under sail between them and Ushant. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD NELSON, K.B.

Torr Abbey, 17th November, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Now that your ceremonies and presentations are nearly gone through, allow me to congratulate you on your safe return to a grateful Country, and to add, that not having been acquainted with your views, or whether the state of your health would admit of your serving in these seas during the winter months, I have constantly kept the San Josef in my mind's-eye for you, as the most appropriate ship in all respects, and to this effect I contrived to keep the Namur in the squadron until pretty far in the last month, although her beams were in danger of slipping from the clamps, and the ship tumbling all to pieces; at the same time, I endeavoured to impress Lord Spencer with a just opinion that her ship's company, having behaved in the most correct manner during the whole time of tumult and sedition, at home and abroad, they ought to be an exception, from a wise general principle, and to continue serving together, and I recommended in the most earnest manner that they should form the basis of the San Josef's crew; that Captain Luke would do justice to her in the equipment, and give her up like a saint to any Flag-Officer who might fall in love with her, keeping your value and pretensions out of sight. To the Builder and other Dock Officers at Plymouth I held out an idea that I intended to fix upon her for my flag, with a view to have her better finished and fitted than ordinary.

Remember me in the kindest manner to Lady Nelson, say everything proper to Sir William and Lady Hamilton, and be assured I am yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

My carcass is very crazy, the mind as active as ever.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Torr Abbey, 19th November, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have ever considered the care of the sick and wounded as one of the first duties of a Commander-in-chief, by sea or land; and it will be found, that the moment I got an *able, zealous*, and *disinterested* man at the head of the Naval Hospital Staff in the Mediterranean, Gibraltar, and Port Mahon, Hospitals were put upon the best possible footing. On the same principle, when I arrived in this bay six months ago, I employed Mr. Baird to investigate the conveyance of the sick and wounded from Brixham to Dartmouth, and their treatment at the last-mentioned place, and the report he made, filled me with horror, insomuch I immediately represented to the Commissioners of the Sick and Wounded Board the necessity of an inspection by one of its members, whose report I am ignorant of. I fear the Board attends too much to the journals transmitted by the Surgeons, which I know are, in some instances, extracted from Cullen and other medical and surgical authors, while the compilers neither know nor attend to their duty. Most faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN . .

Torr Abbey, 24th November, 1800.

DEAR SIR,

I am by no means displeased with you, but I am hurt beyond expression that the rigorous example of your excellent father-in-law produces so little effect on his subordinates. Very sincerely yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR HYDE PARKER.

Torr Abbey, 25th November, 1800.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

You have no occasion to trouble yourself upon the subject of corresponding with the Admiralty, except when you are actually at sea, and obtain any intelligence of the movements of the enemy, which you may judge of such importance as to require the most direct communication.

Yours most sincerely, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN SOTHEBY.

Torr Abbey, 27th November, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have ever considered the loss of a ship, in zealous execution of orders, meritorious, and equally so with a surrender after a brave defence against an enemy of superior force, and I have endeavoured to impress Lord Spencer with the same opinion.

Very sincerely your humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN SAWYER.

Torr Abbey, 9th December, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am extremely concerned for the cause which compelled you to deviate from an Admiralty order, because I am sure it must have been a very serious indisposition.

I cannot give the sanction you desire; a moment's consideration will convince you that to assume such a power, at any time, would be highly presumptuous, and, in the present deplorable state of naval discipline, criminal. The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have directed the division which the Russell is in, to be held in constant readi-

ness for sudden service, and the order I have thought fit to give corresponds with it; for Officers and men cannot, with justice or propriety, be kept on board, if the Captain sleeps on shore.

Believe me to be very sincerely yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Torr Abbey, 11th December, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Depend upon it I will never give in while able to do my duty.

The artificers in the King's yards do not earn sixpence per diem in the ordinary way of working; but if the Surveyor will let a few gangs of good shipwrights undertake the Victory by piece-work, and allow them to earn as much as they can fairly, she will be finished by Lady-day.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Torr Abbey, 13th December, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

I wish very much to see the oath of secresy not to reveal opinions delivered on sentences of Courts-martial abolished; it is a sanction to weak and wicked men, and too generally brings discredit on those of sound judgment and integrity. Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Torr Abbey, 17th December, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

Captain , than whom a more honourable man or more zealous Officer does not exist, is so much wounded by the rebuke I was directed to convey to him, that I have been

under the greatest apprehension lest he should resign his commission; but he being a thinking and sensible man, I have hitherto succeeded in delaying his carrying this measure into execution.

I enclose to your Lordship the answer he gave to the communication I made to him by order of the Board, and a letter he received this morning from Rear-Admiral Collingwood, neither he nor I wishing to enter into anything like a discussion, with a superior Board, on a point of service; I hope, however, that some measure will be speedily hit upon to heal the severe wound he has received.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

Torr Abbey, 17th December, 1800.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

If Vice-Admiral is permitted to mix so much gall in your ink, every officer of spirit and distinction will be driven out of the service. I have written fully to Lord Spencer upon the subject of Captain , whom I have great difficulty in retaining; and if the monstrous letter which was written to me in consequence of his just representation is not done away, you will soon have a Captain to name for the ; and the next impertinence I receive will make room for Sir Hyde Parker.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL WHITSHED.

Torr Abbey, 19th December, 1800.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

Stand all fast, and do not budge with the wind to the southward of south-east, for we know full well that no ship-of-the-line can get out of Brest with the wind I have described. Yours sincerely, ST. VINCENT.

FROM LORD NELSON.

San Josef, Cawsand Bay, December 22, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

Without orders, here we are, and I may say I believe, take her altogether, in the finest ship in the world; with sleet and rain, ropes stiff, and sails half set, very squally, she works like a cutter, and, I firmly believe, will beat most of our frigates; the Master-attendant and pilot declare they never had so little trouble with a sloop of war. I hope there will be orders to complete our complement, and the ship be paid on Saturday. On Sunday we shall get rid of all our women, dogs, and pigeons, and on Wednesday, with the lark, I hope to be under sail for Torbay, where, I trust, San Josef will become a perfect man-of-war; with every kind wish to yourself and party, believe me, my dear Lord, your obliged and affectionate NELSON.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Torr Abbey, 24th December, 1800.

MY DEAR LORD,

I agree with your Lordship entirely as to the propriety of the Board remarking upon Captain 's statement, and on the formal report made by Rear-Admiral Collingwood, but I can never be brought to think that the difference was of such a nature as to justify the tone of the letter in question. The honour of an Officer may be compared to the chastity of a woman, and when once wounded, never can be recovered. I am in hopes a second report from the Rear-Admiral will furnish a proper occasion to do away the sting of this unfortunate letter.

Most faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN

Torr Abbey, 30th December, 1800.

MY DEAR ,

Lord Spencer has written to you, but his letter probably is sent viâ Plymouth, and may be a long time before it reaches you; I therefore send you a copy of the Board's olive branch; and as I know you think with me, that however much our superiors are misled by the arts, passions, and influence of an individual, it is not for our interest that they should be let down, I have no doubt of this explanation being as satisfactory to you as it is to

Your very sincere and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

Torr Abbey, 4th January, 1801.

MY DEAR NEPEAN,

When you are better acquainted with Captain Foley, you will esteem him as we all do; for, under a heavy look, lies a sound and excellent understanding, great temper, and pleasant wit; to his own family he is a most kind and generous benefactor, and in all private transactions perfectly chaste and correct.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN GORE.

Torr Abbey, 14th January, 1801.

SIR,

Under the present impending storm from the North of Europe, and the necessity there is of equipping every ship in the royal ports that can swim, to enable us to meet such a host of foes, no ship under my command must have anything done to her at Plymouth or Portsmouth that can be done at this anchorage.

Very sincerely your humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO EVAN NEPEAN, ESQ.

H.M.S. Ville de Paris, in Torbay, 21st January, 1801.

SIR,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, recalling to my recollection the expression of the man belonging to the Superb; and as the 26th instant is drawing near, signifying to me the direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to order all the Officers belonging to the Fleet under my command to be on board their ships every night, and as much as the service will admit in the day; to be particularly attentive to the conduct of their ship's companies; and prepared to suppress, by the most vigorous and decisive measures, any attempt at mutiny the first moment they discover it. In reply to which, I desire you will acquaint their Lordships that I have unceasingly reminded the Flag-officers and Captains of the necessity of keeping a watchful eye on the conduct of their respective ship's companies, as will appear by the enclosed directions; and I have repeated the same this day, with the strictest injunctions for every Officer to be constantly at his post, without demonstrating the real cause; to avoid which it is insinuated that intelligence has been received of an intention of the enemy to attempt burning the squadron in the Bay; and I have issued the accompanying general order for a guard to be rowed of a different nature from what has hitherto been in practice, to sanction the report.

Different communications have lately been made to me by Lieutenant-General Simcoe, and Lord Rolle, of a possible combination between some of the volunteers on the borders of the Exe and the seamen of the squadron, which I have in vain endeavoured to trace: the result of my inquiries proves nothing more than general rumours, which have obtained since the month of August, 1799: that there

is much correspondence carried on betweeen the parties above-mentioned I can have no doubt; and that the volunteers give protection to deserters from the fleet, Lord Rolle is, I understand, convinced of. The good sense of the Lord Lieutenant of the County, and the vigilance of Lieutenant-General Simcoe, Lord Clifford, Mr. C. Cholwich, and a few other Magistrates will, I trust, frustrate any ill intentions which may be in agitation ashore; and their Lordships may rely upon the best possible look-out afloat. I am, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Torr Abbey, 23rd January, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

I thank your Lordship with all my heart for the desire you express to continue the Officers under my command, of whose services in the Mediterranean I am so proud; and as there are more ships of every class adapted to the Baltic, commanded by others, I feel confident not one of them will be taken from me.

Most faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Torr Abbey, 23rd January, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

Nothing short of a radical sweep in the dockyards can cure the enormous evils and corruptions in them; and this cannot be attempted till we have peace.

Yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

CHAPTER II.

On the resignation of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Addington succeeds as Premier.—The Minister offers the Admiralty to Lord St. Vincent.—After an audience with the King, Lord St. Vincent accepts office.—Lord St. Vincent as First Lord of the Admiralty.

UPON the resignation of Mr. Pitt and the dissolution of his Ministry, Mr. Addington, who then was honoured with the King's chief confidence, and had accepted the office of First Lord of the Treasury, transmitted a message to Lord St. Vincent, requesting his immediate presence in London, to inform the Minister on the affairs of the Navy. His Lordship was then at Torr Abbey. He lost no time in obeying the summons: having made the necessary arrangements for the conduct of the fleet, he departed to London, with his Secretary, on the evening after this communication reached him. They travelled till eight in the evening, rising nominally at five, which in reality was four: and at Newton, where they reposed on the first night, they left orders accordingly with the waiter at the inn.

Occupying the adjoining room to his Lordship, his Secretary heard him stirring before four on the next morning, and he immediately arose, well knowing he should soon be summoned. Before he

was half dressed he heard, "Tucker, Tucker," and that his Lordship was violently ringing his bell; but there was no answer to it — the servants were all asleep. Presently after, he heard his Lordship on the landing-place of the stairs, calling out, "Holloa! holloa! holloa!" and then, after a short pause, "Holloa! holloa! holloa!" as loud as, with his very powerful voice, he could possibly hollow. Mr. Tucker ran out and found his Lordship in his shirt, and many of the inmates of the house in theirs, each of these exclaiming on arrival, "What's the matter? what's the matter?" "I can get no answer to my bell," said his Lordship. "Why, my Lord, there's no one up yet," said one of the naked alarmed. "And so I perceive," said his Lordship, sinking with laughter at the very ridiculous scene, and figures which he had raised: "but how then were you going to call us in time?"—and then, "By G—d, Mr. Tucker, you West-country people sleep away all your senses; 'tis owing to the climate I suppose." It may be imagined that now, his Lordship having called the servants to enable them to call himself, the carriage soon came round, and how gladly the folks of the inn got rid of such a restless animal.

The result of the opinions and discussions which Lord St. Vincent delivered at his interview with the Premier was, that Mr. Addington communicated the King's command, that the appointment of First Lord of the Admiralty should be offered to his Lordship. Lord St. Vincent entertained the proposal;—and it should be observed, that he had not intrigued for it

by Parliamentary artifice, or factious manœuvre; he had not even solicited it; he was a politician, but politics were not a trade to him; a public man, but not an adventurer; and ministrally, an untried servant, to be judged of by his actions only.

The cause which has been alleged of Mr. Pitt's retirement, — so far as it was ostensibly received, was, the opposition which the Royal Closet offered to Catholic emancipation, to which George III. was the bigoted, uncompromising, immovable opponent. But of religious tolerance Lord St. Vincent was as firmly the advocate. His Lordship had full confidence in the loyalty of Ireland; at least, that the Catholic religion predominating there, by no means tended to shake his assurance of Her allegiance,—allegiance, in fact, is the tie which binds the subject to the Crown; "it relates not to spiritual, but to civil duties, to those temporal tributes and obligations which the subject owes to the person of the Sovereign, and to the authority of the state."

But then the unfettered exercise by the Crown of its choice of ministers, is among the strongest safeguards in the English constitution; and of all lawful royal prerogatives, to the minutest tittle, was Lord St. Vincent the eager defender. In his Lordship's opinion, the time was then arrived, when the welfare of the State was best consulted by supporting the Crown. Also, his own habitual exercise of authority, tended to excite an admiration for a King who would insist on being substantially, as well as nominally, a Monarch. But that neither zeal in loyalty, nor the allurements of office, induced a moment's

forgetfulness of what was due to himself, he was, above all things, careful to manifest.

On the day that his Lordship arrived in London, he dined with Mr. Nepean, the First Secretary of the Admiralty; besides whom the party consisted of Lord Hobart, Sir Andrew Hammond, and Lord St. Vincent's Secretary. After dinner, the conversation turned upon the prospects of the new Administration, and Lord Hobart expressed strong doubts of their being able to maintain the government; but Lord St. Vincent was confident that they should do very well, "because the Country did not see any occasion for reducing the Crown to an extremity." To which Lord Hobart replied: "Our great reliance is on you, — your Lordship is our shield and backbone." When his Lordship retired in the evening, he saw by the countenance of his Secretary, who, as may be supposed, "accepted office with a most unfashionable willingness," that he thought everything was settled for his going to the Admiralty; but his Lordship said, "Mr. Tucker, it is by no means so certain as you and the gentlemen with whom we have dined to day seem to think, that I shall take the Admiralty; however, I'll tell you more about it to-morrow, after I have seen the King."

The Secretary waited all anxiety for his Lordship on his return from the audience. His first words were, "Now, Mr. Tucker, it is all settled, and I shall take office;" and he immediately named his Board of Admiralty, and the other persons for the various departments. After that, his Lordship re-

lated what had passed between the King and himself, on the subject of his joining Mr. Addington, at that political crisis. "That having expressed his duty and thanks to His Majesty for His condescension and favour, and having entreated that his Majesty would allow him to express his opinion freely upon a subject which he was most desirous to mention, and to which the King very readily assented, he said, 'that he should make but a bad return for all the honours and favours which His Majesty had most graciously bestowed upon him, and very ill discharge his duty, if he did not frankly and honestly tell His Majesty, that, having served nearly half a century with the Roman Catholics, and seen them tried in all situations, it was his decided and conscientious opinion, that they were entitled to be placed upon the same footing in every respect as His Majesty's Protestant subjects,—that he had been informed that the retiring Ministry had resigned upon that question, and that he could not accept office under such circumstances, without first stating to His Majesty, that upon his honour and upon his allegiance, he entirely agreed with them in opinion; that having now discharged this duty to His Majesty and to himself, he would also add, that his life and his utmost services were at His Majesty's disposal, and that he was ready to return to the fleet, or to serve His Majesty on shore, or to retire into private life, as His Majesty might think proper to command,'—that the King listened very attentively to all he said, and when he had finished, that His Majesty replied:—'Lord St. Vincent, you have

in this instance, as you have in every other, behaved like an honest honourable man;—upon the question of Catholic emancipation my mind is made up, from which I *never* will depart; and therefore, as it is not likely that it will be a matter agitated or discussed between us, I can see no reason why you should not take the Admiralty, where I very much wish to see you, and to place the Navy entirely in your hands." The other members of Mr. Addington's administration consisted of—Lord Chancellor, Lord Eldon; President of the Council, Duke of Portland; Minister of War, Lord Buckinghamshire; Home Department, Lord Pelham; Secretary of War, Mr. Yorke; Lord Privy Seal, Lord Westmoreland; Foreign Affairs, Lord Hawkesbury.

Besides the precedent of its constitutional succour to the Crown at such a crisis, and its administration of Naval affairs, this Cabinet has not left many vestiges of its existence. In the debate which soon after the change of Ministry ensued on Mr. Grey's motion for a committee on the state of the nation, Mr. Fox made some strong remarks on the inefficiency of Mr. Addington's colleagues; but then, he thus excepted the First Lord of the Admiralty:—"Before I touch upon others, allow me to say, that I do not think it would be easy, if possible, to find a man in the whole community better suited, or more capable of the high office he fills, than the distinguished person at the head of the Admiralty—I mean the Earl of St. Vincent."

To his Lordship in his character of First Lord of

the Admiralty, therefore, will the memoirs of this portion of his life be almost exclusively confined. It is, moreover, well known, that he found the duties of his department demand such unremitting and laborious attention, that he more than once addressed his request to the King and to the Premier to be excused from all attendance at the Cabinet, except on the affairs of the Navy. That the counsel of the main support of the Cabinet ought not to have been, and was not, dispensed with, scarcely need be said; but that the request was made, and twice repeated, is certain.

Whether we look at home or abroad, it will appear, that the conjuncture at which Mr. Addington's ministry took upon itself the responsibility of office, was anything but enviable; yet, had they declined it, the Crown would have been driven into an untoward position of helplessness, very injurious to the public weal; and so apparent was that, even to the retiring party, that on resigning, they promised far more effective support to the Cabinet understood to succeed, than they afterwards afforded.

In England a scarcity, the result of a bad harvest, was so severe, that wheat, which, according to Mr. Porter,* in the preceding ten years, had averaged 54*s.* was now at 110*s.* per quarter, then rose to 139*s.*, and soon after to 180*s.*, and for four weeks the quartern loaf was as high as 1*s.* 10½*d.* Nine years' war of the French revolution had fatigued, and well nigh exhausted the Country. Petitions for peace, especially from the northern Counties, were very frequent. By no inconsiderable portion of the Nation,

* Progress of the Nation.

the necessity then of war at all, was denied; by many more, our conduct in it was impugned, who attributed our failure at Quiberon, Ferrol, and North Holland to more than misfortune. Then the violalation of the treaty of El-Arish, the submission to repair the Danish frigate the Freya, were highly unpopular; and though, after Mr. Pitt's resignation, news was received of Sir Ralph Abercromby's great victory in Egypt, yet, up to February, the prevalent feeling in England about the expedition was, discontent at its being kept so long at sea.

As to the Continent, the peace of Luneville had prostrated one half of it to France; for the spirit of the House of Austria was broken, and Buonapartean garrisons, or influence overawed Her possessions in the Low Countries. Russia and Prussia, once our Allies, had been sacrificed or deserted, till first defeat laid them at the foot of the conqueror; and then necessity ranged them against us.—Spain, Piedmont, Switzerland, and at length the rest of Europe, were either abandoned by us, or mastered by our rival,—Portugal, and perhaps Turkey, alone excepted; but, save the roadstead of the Tagus, from whence our Navy might intercept the French and Spanish Fleets, and prevent their juncture, to command the Channel, even these Allies were sources rather of weakness than of strength to England individually.

This state of affairs was certainly no inducement to Lord St. Vincent to incur the responsibilities of office: but, that the representation is not overstrained, Mr. Pitt himself, and, afterwards, his retreat shall show; "True it is," he said, "the Country is placed in

the most perilous and alarming state, and every effort of the national energy is necessary to avert the danger. True it is, that a conspiracy has been formed against our independence, and even our existence as a great nation, of a nature unprecedented in any period of our history, and that extraordinary exertions alone can enable us to prolong its power."* Happily for the Country, it fell to the department over which Lord St. Vincent presided to make the efforts, and to display the energy, which Mr. Pitt so truly said were indispensable to meet the danger in which he left the Nation, when he deserted his post.

The first object of the government was to attack the confederacy of the North, which a fleet had been previously ordered to assail in the Baltic. The equipment of this naval force was the Cabinet's first and instant concern, and therefore it properly brings this narrative to the immediate observation of Lord St. Vincent in the administration of the Admiralty.

Consistently with his beautiful description of Sir Thomas Troubridge, "as the ablest adviser and best executive Officer in the British Navy, *with honour and courage bright as his sword*," his Lordship nominated him as the senior Sea Lord; Captain Markham was the second; the other members of the Board were, Sir Philip Stephens, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Gartshore.

Turning his immediate attention to the equipment of the squadron for the Baltic, Lord St. Vincent found that Lord Spencer had drafted fourteen sail-of-the-line from the Channel Fleet for this pur-

* Parl. Hist. vol. xxxv. p. 960.

pose. These ships, therefore, as the circumstances of the war permitted no reduction of the force blockading Brest, were to be replaced by fourteen others, yet to be brought forward, while most of those destined to the Baltic stood in need of repair before they could go to sea. The exertions of nine years of a war of such unparalleled efforts were alone enough to have rendered so large an additional demand for efficient ships, one with which it would have been most difficult to comply; but the obstacles of Dock-yards exhausted of their stores, and of ports drained of their seamen, were slight in comparison to very different impediments which suddenly arose against the First Lord of the Admiralty.

Scarcely had Lord St. Vincent entered upon his official duties, than information was communicated by the Secretary of State for the Home Department that delegates from the shipwrights from all the Royal yards had arrived in town, that they held secret meetings, and were about to present to the Admiralty "the *demands* of their *constituents!*" No insight into naval civil affairs is wanting to comprehend the seriousness of this check. At the very idea of a strike in all the Dock-yards, the Cabinet, excepting his Lordship, stood appalled. But to Lord St. Vincent mutiny was no novelty; and now he would have instantly dealt with this one after his own manner, if still further obstruction had not raised a short-lived hindrance.

Considering the extreme urgency for the immediate departure of the Baltic Fleet, and the extent and combination of this shipwright disaffection, Lord

St. Vincent had thought it his duty to bring the subject before the Cabinet. His colleagues, eager to break the confederacy of the North, were for conciliatory measures. Lord St. Vincent was not: he predicted the "worse than uselessness of such milk-and-water physic," and he only yielded to "one short trial," upon the condition that "nothing should be attempted which, he might think, would indicate fear or compromise authority."

The delegates were, and admitted themselves to be, in correspondence with committees in all the Dockyards, and to be supplied by money thus collected from the artificers. Their "demand," was for an increase of wages, in consequence of the high price of bread. Upon reference to the pay-books at the Admiralty, it was proved that their average yearly earnings were above 93*l.*; nevertheless, the price of a ration of provisions, in proportion to the number of each man's family, was offered to them, in addition to their pay, to continue while the scarcity lasted, but to cease with it. This the delegates accordingly communicated to all "their constituents;" but this, was widely indeed apart from the views of the shipwrights; for they, fully aware of the urgency for the Baltic squadron, and therefore of the importance of their services; relying upon mutual support in all the yards; wofully misjudging the man they now had to deal with; and believing the welfare of the Nation to be, not in his hands, but in theirs, rejected the Admiralty's offer, and "insisted," (*shipwrights* insisting to Lord St. Vincent!) that not only "their pay should be doubled, but

permanently!" And to such an extent of disorder had they carried their demeanour at Plymouth, where the sedition was most completely organized, that the military had been called upon to support the civil power, and the artillery had placed their guns in the main street, pointing them to the yard. On the one hand, the Cabinet pressed for the squadron to the Baltic; on the other, sedition threatened to set the Admiralty at defiance, and disorganize society. But in Lord St. Vincent's opinion, this was not remonstrance, but insubordination; he therefore at once decided that it should not only be suppressed, but also punished; and severely. He acquainted the Cabinet that "he had determined on measures of vigour;" and when the delegates, in full confidence of extorting from a frightened Board, returned to the office to ask "the result to their insist," they were thunderstruck at hearing that the "result was, that the Board had ordered them to be turned out of the Admiralty Hall into the street; that they were all discharged from the service; and that the same fate would punish every man in every yard who had acted as a committee-man, or who had been at all active in collecting money to support the combination." A committee of the Navy Board was immediately despatched by the Admiralty to every yard, to make the necessary investigation; and upon their report, every delinquent who had thus signalized himself was dismissed.

Need the effect be stated?—not a murmur of disturbance, not a symptom of disobedience was after-

wards perceptible. To have a right to "insist" was never again imagined; the yard duties regularly proceeded; and the much required ships being all repaired, the manning those to reinforce the Channel Fleet alone remained. And this was done, by withdrawing a portion of the complement of every ship on the home station, and with that skill and that knowledge of the composition and efficiency of each ship's crew, and of her Officers, that at once proclaimed the scientific hand from whom alone such an adjustment could have emanated.

And the Baltic Fleet having been thus equipped, when the sailing orders were despatched to it from the Admiralty, Lord St. Vincent appeared to be under some anxiety as to its success. Upon his Secretary's remarking that the squadron was in excellent order, well fitted, well manned, well officered, and well commanded, Lord St. Vincent replied, that "he was quite sure of Nelson, and should have been in no apprehension, if he had been of rank to take the chief command; but that he could not feel quite so sure about Sir Hyde, as he had never been tried."

How gloriously at Copenhagen Lord Nelson and his gallant squadron relieved Lord St. Vincent's anxiety, and verified his Lordship's prediction of his *élève's* superiority, it belongs not to this narrative to tell: all that may be here said is, Mr. Pitt's administration planned this expedition; Lord Spencer selected the hero of it for the particular service; and Lord St. Vincent's Board of Admiralty equipped the fleet, setting intimidation at nought, and with-

out permitting any weakness to be felt on any other naval station.

The despatch of the Baltic Fleet has been, and truly, stated as Lord St. Vincent's first measure. Yet, the admirable conduct, the unflinching loyalty of the Marines during the mutiny, and their inestimable value to their Country, was uppermost in his thoughts: and at one of his first audiences with the King, his Lordship submitted that His Majesty's approbation should be testified by His Majesty's declaring that most gallant to be a *Royal* corps, with the corresponding rank and uniform. George III. "highly approved" of the advice. It is true that the official announcement did not issue at so early a period, but that was owing solely to efforts which Lord St. Vincent less successfully made, to have "service afloat," and "as Marines," announced as a part of the ordinary duty of every Regiment of the line, in rotation. To this the opposition of the Commander-in-chief of the army, and of the finance Minister was too powerful; but such was, and ever remained, Lord St. Vincent's wish, and that question it was which delayed the notice in the Gazette.

The writer of these pages is perfectly conscious, that however ardently he may participate in the national pride in this, our certainly, "*per mare per terram*," most distinguished corps, still, that any eulogy from him would be utterly beneath notice from their lofty station. Yet he is no less confident, that they will not disdain to receive through so humble an individual, an additional testimony to their merit in such an opinion as Lord St. Vin-

cent's; and thus, in later years, when advocating, as he did in almost every letter to his friends, the reduction of the national forces at the peace, but excepting the Marines, his Lordship expressed himself: "In obtaining for them the distinction of 'Royal,' I but inefficiently did my duty. I never knew an appeal to them for honour, courage, or loyalty, that they did not more than realize my highest expectations. If ever the hour of real danger should come to England, they will be found the Country's sheet anchor;"—sentences which only set the seal to an estimation which was before universal, and proclaim the security on which every one is conscious he was silently reposing.

As Lord St. Vincent acceded to office at a period when the policy of the enemy was aggressive war upon England, expectation may perhaps be somewhat balked that the much debated question of the wisdom in his preparations to repel invasion, is not at once introduced; but consideration on this important subject, on which his Lordship took a view so decidedly at variance to some civilians politically opposed to him, is purposely deferred, until the whole matter can be brought fully under attention. In all its bearings, the subject should not be now presented. The discussion had not arisen; and except the placing a force of frigates and boats at Deal, the duration of the war did not call for further exhibition of the naval defences, which in Lord St. Vincent's view, were best adapted to our insular liability to assault. That, on his return from Copenhagen, Lord Nelson was appointed to command

the forces on the coasts opposite the threatening hostile harbours, is only what the Nation would have decreed for Her own safety. The attack on Boulogne may not be related here; but how poignantly Lord St. Vincent felt the loss of his relative, Captain Parker, of the Medusa, his Lordship's letter will hereafter represent, with quite a painful reality.

Besides that to the Baltic, the Cabinet had only occasion to despatch one more squadron of line-of-battle-ships before the war closed. What here is to be noticed is, whom Lord St. Vincent would select for the command. It was Sir James Saumarez, whom in later times his Lordship thus described: "Great and glorious as has been his public career, the virtues of his private life eclipse it." When the first information of Sir James' gallant, though unsuccessful attack on the French fleet on the 6th July reached the Admiralty, the bombast of a French newspaper was the relator of the affair. It however seemed certain that somehow or other a British line-of-battle ship had struck her colours! (the Hannibal, Captain Ferris, which unfortunately running too close in with baffling winds after the enemy, grounded, and was obliged to surrender). "Well," said Lord St. Vincent to his Board, "we may have lost a ship, but well do I know the man and the men who were there, and I shall not hesitate to go and pledge my life to the King that the Nation has lost no honour." The unparalleled exertions of that undaunted little squadron to again seek the enemy; their victory on the evening

of the 12th July; the brilliant bravery of the Superb; and the terrible night explosion of two of the enemy's three-deckers, shaking Gibraltar to its foundation, were a grand and awful termination to fighting in those seas. Soon after the official intelligence of the victory reached England, the French Agent, M. Otto, who was ostensibly accredited to transact the exchange of prisoners, before many weeks' residence announced his secret instructions to negotiate, and preliminaries were settled, which ultimately led to the Treaty of Amiens. Though the nation hailed the peace rapturously, the Opposition, especially the Grenvilles, early predicted the insecurity of any terms with Buonaparte. In the discussion in the House of Lords on the preliminaries, Lord St. Vincent spoke shortly, in reply to Lord Spencer, and maintained the honourableness and advantages of the intended treaty.*

War being at an end, to relieve the Country, most of the ships were immediately paid off. At the first discharge of any crews, the American Minister, Mr. Rufus King, delivered to Lord St. Vincent a list of between two and three hundred seamen who had declared themselves to be Americans, and to have been impressed into the British

* The prediction of the Grenvilles that no reliance could be safely placed on Buonaparte certainly was verified; but still Mr. Fox, in the introduction to the life of James II., announces the sound principle, and that which is the best defence of the treaty of Amiens: "Sad indeed will be the condition of the world if we are *never* to make peace with an adverse party whose sincerity we have reason to suspect."

navy. Mr. King urged, that as England had enjoyed the benefit of their services, it was but fair to find them free conveyance to their native Country; and he added, that the Minister for foreign affairs had assented to the justice of this appeal. But Lord St. Vincent regarded the application only as an effort of some of our own men to get a free passage to America, and he at once declared that to be his view; but promised an impartial investigation of their statements. The result verified his prediction; except thirty or forty every single one was British born, and not a man of them had been impressed. The application therefore was rejected altogether.

As soon as the ships were dismantled, and measures taken for an examination of the state they were in, Lord St. Vincent applied an almost undivided attention to the civil affairs of the Navy: indeed, it was now become his duty as First Lord of the Admiralty, to redeem the pledges of an investigation which had been given by a preceding Board, in reply to an order in Council to that effect, dated January, 1792, when Lord Chatham was the First Lord.

Of Lord Spencer's administration of the Navy, it is impossible to say anything but what is honourable; his Lordship perceived that an enormity of abuse and malversation prevailed throughout, and he determined to correct it; but he also saw, that a radical investigation alone could be productive of any real good; and it is beyond all doubt that, considering the urgency of the naval war in which the Country

was then involved, and the deplorable events of the Mutiny, which latterly were superadded to the anxiety, it not only was impossible to effect, but it would have been very dangerous to have attempted, those strong measures of inquiry which alone could be useful. Peace could only afford opportunity for effecting such measures. This the Finance Committee admitted when, in 1798, it wrote to the Navy Board, "That the House and the public have reason to expect that on a return of peace many months will not be suffered to elapse without a steady determination being shown to examine into all the different departments to which the attention of the Admiralty was directed so long ago as 1792." The same reasoning was also sanctioned by Lord St. Vincent himself, when in 1800 he wrote, "Nothing but a radical sweep of our Dockyards, can do any good, and that can only be accomplished in a peace."

But now the peace was come; and now also was seen, that not less fortunately did Lord St. Vincent appear at the presidency of the civil affairs of the British Navy, at the moment which was favourable to reform; than in Chief command afloat, at the moment when discipline was to be systematised; or as the Admiral of that fleet on foreign service, at the moment when mutiny was to be suppressed. Though less popularly interesting, his practical capacity for the business of the office was not less astonishing, not less suited to the times, not less beneficial to his Country in immediate effect and remote consequences, than his vigorous command at sea.

Before attempting to introduce here such an outline of Lord St. Vincent's administration of the Navy as may be intelligible to the general reader, and find a courteous tolerance in the sight of the sailor, it seems advisable to premise the order in which the subjects it embraces will be taken. Thoroughly convinced as Lord St. Vincent was that reform was demanded in every department, it should seem that nothing is wanted, but a plain description of the economy in which he found, and the economy in which he left, each branch of the service. But reflection has induced a belief, that though this would be the easiest review to write, it would not be the clearest to take, of all that transpired in Lord St. Vincent's investigation into these multifarious and extensive subjects. A different arrangement will produce a less tiresome statement.

That, as the first practical reformer who carried his plans into effect, Lord St. Vincent was encountered at every turn of the eye, and of the hand, by the powerful opposition of the corrupt combined with the slothful; and that upon a principle of mental mechanics, if the expression is allowable, the force of his mind was only called into play by resistance, is nothing more than would have been expected from the odiousness and fearfulness of honesty among such delinquents, and the firmness of character which the reformer had exhibited as an Officer. And so it proved. At first opposed by the fraudulent and idle in the community at large, then thwarted by bigotry and prejudice in subordi-

nate naval departments, Lord St. Vincent was afterwards assailed by jealousy in the Senate.

To the din and rage of spoliating money-coining jobbers and contractors complaining of "vexatious strictness and severity"; * to the mortified spleen of subordinate departments resisting reforms they had previously overlooked; the character of Lord St. Vincent as much disdains to reply, as it despised the insurrection they raised. Having explored and exposed their nefarious peculations, profligate expenditure, and supine negligence; content that other naval investigations would be more palatable to them than his own,† he smiled at their calumnies

* The Contractors' Memorial to the Navy Board, printed by order of the House of Commons.

† The day after Mr. Pitt's *Board of Naval Revision* (the reader is entreated never to confound it with Lord St. Vincent's *Committee of Naval Enquiry*) first met, one of its members, a most amiable Naval Officer went to Lord St. Vincent's Secretary, and after a little general conversation, said, in his usual good-natured way, "My dear Tucker, do, for Heaven's sake pity me, for I am one of those placed in a most extraordinary situation; I am one of the Board of Revision, and, egad, I know nothing in the world about the matter; and only fancy a person to put on a table some gold, some iron, steel, and glass, and then say, 'here are all the materials, now make a watch;' but I know nothing of watch-making, nor does a single one of my colleagues; and, of course, if ever we do make a watch, we must first get information how from some other person. Now, my dear fellow, you are a watch maker, so do, for God's sake, tell us how to set to work to make this watch." After a little more joking upon the subject, they became serious, and the Secretary said, "he could render them no assistance, for they did not work the same way." Sir Roger: "No, no, that's very true. For instance, if you (I mean, my dear

and menaces. But to the charge in the House of Commons by Mr. Pitt, and because by Mr. Pitt, a distinct answer must be made. Wherefore, mention of those measures which his political enemy arraigned will be reserved from the history of Lord St. Vincent's naval administration till the narrative reaches the period of the accusation: and this at least will be conceded,—the arrangement which presents measures for the first time to view, only to vindicate them from blame, places them in the least partial light. But the vantage ground of a previous conciliatory statement is foregone, first, because much

fellow, you know, those with whom you have been acting) find a sore place, what do you do but immediately whip on a red hot caustic, or a handful of cayenne."—"Why to be sure we do; what else could we do but cauterise it to the bottom, in order to get an effectual cure? what would you do, Sir?"—"I would apply oil, oil. You'll heal it much sooner, be assured."—"Well, but you'll not heal it effectually; for it will only skin over, and assuredly it will break out again."—"Oh yes, it will heal quite *enough;* I always apply oil, and you pepper; upon every other point we perfectly agree."—"Then, Sir, I assure you, that I am utterly unable to help you." And away they walked laughing, both having intended to call on Lord St. Vincent in Mortimer Street, to whom the point at issue was jokingly submitted.

At first his Lordship also laughed at the colloquy; but then becoming in earnest: "Sir Roger Curtis," he said, "upon mature reflection I am convinced, that if *we* had used "oil, oil," the Country's interests and the public delinquent would have slipped through our fingers."

Whether his Lordship predicted truly of Mr. Pitt's *Board of Naval Revision*, they who know most of naval civil matters can best tell; but at least one witness, a public Officer of long experience in such affairs, Sir John Barrow, has testified to their do-nothingness; and can any one point out a single delinquent whom they brought to light?

repetition of tiresome detail is avoided, for by no means could censure from Mr. Pitt pass unnoticed, but chiefly from confidence in the only opinion which could be formed of the conduct of him whom the late Rear-Admiral, the Honourable Sir Courtenay Boyle, so happily described as "the great Officer and Statesman who might *hold up his hand fearlessly to the Service and to his Country.*"

But Lord St. Vincent had written to Lord Spencer that the "civil department of the Navy was rotten to the very core," and that "investigation and reform were wanted in every department." He had, moreover, collected with the sagacity which characterizes the true reformer, a knowledge of facts and abuses in almost every branch of the affairs under his administration; his mind was balancing with which he should begin.—A common caulker turned the scale.

An artificer of that class in Plymouth Dockyard, named Frost, applied to his own immediate Officers and to the Master-shipwright for the character which he then in their opinion might deserve. And as he was a steady, sober, industrious workman, and they supposed that he wanted testimonials to seek promotion, certificates were given of merited and unequivocal commendation. Provided with these incontestable muniments, Frost wrote a letter to the Admiralty impeaching the conduct of the foreman of the caulkers, accusing him of considerable fraud, more especially about the wages of apprentices. The Admiralty sent a committee of the Navy Board to Plymouth, to investigate the charges. An attempt was of course made to destroy the character

of Frost as a credible witness. But that mode of escape Frost at once defeated by producing his certificates, of too recent a date to be gainsaid; and he prayed the committee to pay more attention to testimonials which must have been given without prejudice, than to what the very Officers now under accusation might say in exculpation of themselves at his expense. The committee did so; and the charge being proved, the foreman was dismissed.*

But in the course of these investigations it came out that those frauds were attributable to the negligence of the Master shipwright, and the attention of the committee was called by the resident Commissioner of the Dock-yard to the manner in which the painter's work had been performed and paid for, and to the receipt of the supply of timber; and it clearly appeared that, owing to the negligence of some of the inferior Officers of the yard, enormous frauds had for many years been practised by the workmen and the contractors; all of which was duly reported by the Navy Board to the Admiralty, who immediately ordered that the principal Officers implicated should be dismissed.

Intercession for some was made from the Navy Board by the Comptroller, but ineffectually; Lord St. Vincent replied, "Every sentence of the remonstrance of the Clerks of the Dockyard proves the corruption and total dereliction of duty in them and their principals," and his Lordship was inexorable.

That glaring abuses prevailed nowhere but at

* Frost was appointed to the vacancy, which he filled with great benefit to the Country for more than twenty years.

Plymouth, it was absurd to suppose; and Lord St. Vincent decided that the Navy Board should investigate all the Yards. But from the manner in which the order was obeyed, it was quickly apparent to Lord St. Vincent, that though the search after and exposure of fraud, the acceleration of the dilatory, and the eradication of abuse, were the Admiralty's objects, yet that other steps must be taken to attain success. It should be premised, that then there were two Surveyors of the Navy, and that the Dockyards of Deptford and Woolwich were under their immediate control and superintendence, the senior having Deptford, the junior Woolwich, and that they visited their respective Yards once a week. These Dock-yards the Navy Board now proceeded to examine; when, singularly enough, it happened, that each of the Surveyors was ordered to inspect and report upon the very Yard, for the economy and good conduct of which he was himself in no small degree personally responsible.

This, a manœuvre, whether by connivance or by mistake, was a farce too ridiculous, and "upon too grand a scale" to be permitted to proceed at the Country's expense. Lord St. Vincent was very angry; and he determined to stop it. Acting, therefore upon the King of Prussia's maxim, that it was "*melius prævenire quam præveniri*," he first commanded orders to the resident Commissioners in all the Yards, enjoining them to "instantly place all the books and papers of all the Yards under their private seal," and then he directed the Navy Board to "suspend their investigation; it being the inten-

tion of his Lordship to cause an inspection by the Admiralty itself as soon as possible."

The horror in the Dockyards was almost pitiable. Idleness and Fraud perceived themselves arraigned without a chance of escape; while to the Navy Board an intimation, not to be mistaken, was given, that neither would Lord St. Vincent tolerate any trifling with his official orders, nor put up with the thwarting the spirit of his measures. Thus too commenced the umbrage which generated those bitter feuds, and that well-known intemperate paper warfare between the Admiralty and the subordinate Board; but which squabbles, though every one must regret the lengths and personalities to which they extended, nevertheless performed their part in ultimately producing beneficial results.

The visitation by the Admiralty commenced early in 1802, and extended through all the Dockyards. Long had Lord St. Vincent been convinced of the corrupt state of those establishments; when he commanded in the Mediterranean, he had seen that while the people voted profusely, the fleet was supplied scantily; while contractors became rich, and jobbing flourished, the store-houses were poor, and the Navy was crippled. From before Cadiz he had written to Lord Spencer, that the "civil administration was rotten to the core." But not an idea had Lord St. Vincent of the frauds, the idleness, the abuses, the malversations which he was now about to find, and upon every occasion encounter, at every turn, in every corner, of every Yard, and at every port. Nor is it intended to attempt to place a representation of

their magnitude and extent here, because, though they are all made, nothing short of insufferably dull statements on minute calculations, deduced from numberless official returns and accounts, would offer anything like a semblance of an adequate description; while what was said of more interesting matters tells more forcibly upon these. "Everything grows little as it grows remote; and of things thus diminished, it is sufficient to survey the aggregate without a minute examination of the parts;"* wherefore only a few samples, taken from the official minutes and memoranda of the Admiralty's proceedings, are offered.

Whole classes of men were entered and borne upon the books of the ships in Ordinary, and at the very same time on those of the Receiving Hulks, thus receiving double pay and provisions: others were certified to have for years done usual, even extra duty in the Ordinary, while, on their own application to be absent, as if on service, they had all along plied in their own skiffs as watermen for hire. Here a favourite man was for several years certified to have rendered extra labour the whole of every day, and to have been a vigilant watchman the whole of every night, without a single interruption, and was paid accordingly;—there, the only duty to earn an annual salary, required of a said-to-be "good man," was to appear at church on Sundays. In most of the Yards the identically same items of work were, at different periods, repeatedly charged and paid for over, and over, and over again. The

* Dr. Johnson on National Records, in the Life of the King of Prussia.

greater part of the artificers in all the Yards being employed by the job, in none was there any attention to the notes of the work performed; rarely were the notes themselves made; and if made, often destroyed. Though the men were paid on the principle of task employ, no single instance could be found of the comparison of the quantum of labour rendered with the money demanded having been an ingredient in the calculation of wages. In one Ropeyard the men were all paid extra for what was only three hours' labour: in another, the inspecting Lords of the Admiralty found it necessary to superannuate a whole class of artificers who, up to that very day, had been stated to perform extra duty. One Yard let all its men out every day at eleven and four, for, it was said, a quarter of an hour, but never were they mustered on their return. In another, out of three hundred and thirteen working-days in the year, in only sixty-four was there any muster observed; in a third, the artificers of a whole and that a large class were never mustered at all; and, according to the minutes of the investigation there, the men of an entire department were found to be "incapables, as old, infirm, boys, cripples, or idiots, and the department itself to have the appearance of an asylum for every rogue and vagabond that could not obtain a meal by any other means." Throughout the whole of the Yards, without exception, the old and the young, the strong and the weak, the skilful and the ignorant workman, was paid at the same, and that the highest rate of wages, and generally with addition for extra labour!

Then, in two Dockyards, not one of the Clerks of the Commissioner, of the Storekeeper, of the Officers of the Survey, or of the Master-attendant, had taken the oaths or given the security for fidelity, which the orders in Council required. In few had any notes of receipts and expenditure of stores been transmitted from Storekeeper to Storekeeper; on one occasion the receiving Officer had actually declined to give a receipt for what was at the very moment delivered to his charge. In no Dockyard was any balance of expenditure and stock in hand even contemplated.

The statements too of some of the offenders became, even in such delinquencies, positively amusing. One Officer, accused of appropriating stores to his own use, pleaded, that truly it had so happened that the Yard labourers had sometimes been detected carrying coals from the royal store-houses to his private dwelling; but that was *only* because he having, by merest chance, ordered his own stock at the same time, and by the same ship as that which supplied the royal Yard, his own proportion was, by mistake, deposited in the royal store-houses; and then he had the hardihood to proceed, that the flannel which he had caused to be made into waistcoats, and the canvass into mattrasses, were wretched rags, and so moth-eaten as to be entirely useless (saving as appropriated to his own use); and that the man who, while entered and paid as a labourer, was asserted to have been his private servant, had only brushed his coat a little in the morning, and placed a few dishes on the table in the afternoon, but had *never* been absent

from his regular labourer's duties. One promptly stated off-hand, that of all the myriads of myriads of nails and tacks delivered to his charge, "not a single one was ever *missing*"! Another, still more gifted with barefaced impudence, coolly said, that "he, for his part, did not know why a boat and crew (of four men) waiting for him at Lambeth, in his boat-house (which the Yard had, at his request, kindly erected there near his residence), were not more useful than at the Dockyard itself"! And, what is still worse, this varlet was right enough;—for except to receive his full wages, and to draw his provisions and his allowances, he had never been near the scene of his duty for nearly four years; the Nation having all the while been so generous as to pay *two* deputies to compensate for his absence!

But only peccadilloes, mere imponderable trifles, were these mal-practices and abuses, in comparison with those which the progress of the investigation developed in the more important branches of the Civil department; where, in proportion to the magnitude of the concern, was the enormity of profusion and negligence, and often of fraud. To remedy, even to unravel these malversations, — to contend with delinquents so high and powerful as were found lurking there, Lord St. Vincent soon felt that the greatest strength which the Admiralty could put forth was but fruitless impotence; wherefore, that the being baffled in his efforts at conviction might not induce a supposition that he had been mistaken in his suspicions of criminality, and that the justice due to the Country should be done,

he instantly ordered all ostensible investigation by the Board of these matters to stop; but then he, at the same time, decided on bringing forward a measure in which, as he projected it, power would be found adequate to any mass of fraud, or to any resistance to inquiry:—a parliamentary Commission, to inquire into the whole Naval Civil branch, empowered by the legislature to summon and examine witnesses upon oath, and to call for accounts and documents; the results of the inquiry to be periodically reported to Parliament. And then, as the success of the measure would almost altogether depend upon the fitness of the men to work it out, and on the unfettered independence in which they exerted their powers, Lord St. Vincent insisted, that they should not be left to the nomination or removal of the Crown or Minister, where, in spite of the very best and purest intentions, ignorance of character, or interest, or jobbing, or perchance future political changes might select incompetent Officers, or defeat the whole scheme, or do even worse, might sanction the abuses to be eradicated, —but that the names of the Commissioners should be openly announced, and forming part of the Bill, their individual merit, and their capacity for office, might also be freely canvassed and discussed in Parliament.

This Commission of Naval Inquiry, the precedent of all subsequent cases for well-conducted severe investigation on the part of the State, has been represented as "a drastic measure," * and, truly, so it was intended to be; as in itself "a source

* Lord Brougham.

of vigour and wealth,"*—how could that be otherwise which emanated from a highly talented, honest Minister, whose only object in his measure was, national strength in practical improvement? as "the introduction of the whole subject of economical reform, and" to have "made it become, both in and out of Parliament, for many years, the principal object of all our patriotic statesmen,"† and for that alone, to what unceasing and glowing gratitude is it not entitled? But thus much of it is beyond all dispute or cavil: it made towards practical improvement in those State affairs for which it was particularly designed, that great and honest step which never can be retraced, and never sufficiently acknowledged, — of fearlessly placing before the eyes of the public, intelligible and true information of the details of those transactions into which abuse had crept, and might at any time attempt to return; and it laid the immovable foundation, it paved the broad and certain way, for all the subsequent improvements in the Civil department of the Navy.

But the contriving such measures as this is only a portion of the Statesman's duty; he also has to struggle for their existence; and a necessary truth must be now added, that Mr. Addington's Cabinet, staggered by the force of Lord St. Vincent's plan, at first opposed, and then rejected it altogether.‡

* Mr. Fox. † Lord Brougham.

‡ On purpose to hear the fate of the proposition, the Secretary had the honour of dining with his Lordship on the day it was submitted to the Cabinet. Lord St. Vincent's looks, manners, tones, all indicated that something had gone very

Fully did Lord St. Vincent anticipate this timidity: but it was in vain to tell him that he was about to set in irresistible motion a mighty machine which, perhaps, would be ungovernable, and of the influence of which no one could foresee the extent. His intrepid and powerful understanding was not to be scared from the great good which he did see, by the supposition of evil descried only in conjecture. His answer was: "No power short of what I demand can search such abuses as I denounce; and no honest or faithful servant can have aught to fear." In vain did they try to soften his firmness; the very attempt only accelerated his peremptory notice to his colleagues, that he made it the *sine quâ non* of his remaining in the Cabinet. They then yielded; and the Government officially applied

much amiss. The Secretary awaited silently. But after dinner, when the gentlemen were about to join the ladies, — "Tucker, stay!" — and then: "Excepting my Lord Chancellor, the *whole* Cabinet has *mutinied* to-day! My Commission is rejected! — but," bending his fist, while his countenance personified his invincible firmness, "we 'll read them a lesson out of the Articles of War to-morrow, Sir!" And then he related the opposition he had met with: nor would he again sit on the Ministerial Bench in the House of Lords till he had carried his point.

Did not Lord Eldon then forcibly exhibit his trait of character, which Lord Brougham's sketches thus delineate: "But let there come any real embarrassment, — any substantial peril which required a bold and vigorous act to ward it off,—let there be but occasion for nerve to work through a crisis which it required no common boldness to face at all, — let there arise some new and strange combination of circumstances which, governed by no precedent, must be met by unprecedented measures, and no man that ever sat at Council Board more quickly made up his mind, or more gallantly performed his part."—*Second Series*, 60, LORD ELDON.

to Parliament for the "Commission of Naval Inquiry."

Doubtless, the provision which the Lord Chancellor introduced, that any man might withhold an answer tending to criminate himself, skreened many a culprit, and greatly crippled the energies of the Commissioners: but it is well known to have been Lord St. Vincent's straightforward sailor-like opinion, that the investigation of such flagrant abuses was an occasion for compelling the offender to reveal the secrets of his guilt, and that no such tenderness should be shown for the plunderer. The House of Lords, however, decided otherwise, and thus the Bill passed.

Thus enabled to investigate, the Commissioners proceeded, and reported periodically during several years. The Reports were twelve in number. 1. Foreign Yards. 2. Chest at Chatham (*i.e.* a fund of pension for seamen—subsequently removed to Greenwich, and then to the Navy Office in London). 3. Supply of Blocks and Naval Cooperage. 4. Prize-money and Prize Causes. 5. The Collection of the sixpence from Merchant Seamen. 6. The Economy of the Naval Yards. 7. The Naval Hospitals, and the Hospital-ships for French prisoners at Plymouth. 8. The Victualling and Cooperage at Plymouth. 9. The Receipt and Expenditure of Stores at Plymouth. 10. Office of Treasurer of the Navy. 11. The issue of Money Bills. 12. The purchase of Stores for the Naval Service, more particularly Masts, Spars, Fir, and Hemp.

The zeal and integrity with which the Commis-

sioners performed their duty are their own merits;—Lord St. Vincent's it was, that having discovered the region of negligence, corruption, and fraud, and having well calculated the resistance which would obstruct his exploring their lurking-places, and dragging forth the guilty, he called into existence a force adequate to overcome it, making, at the same time, the only remaining provision for success, of announcing the men competent to wield the power and to grapple with the antagonist. That many, if not most of the abuses which they unravelled, had attracted Lord St. Vincent's notice, more especially those of merchant-building, of contracts, and of Dock-yard malpractices, developed in the 3rd, 6th, and 11th Reports, there can be no doubt; in fact, in his discovery of these originated the Commission, and reference will be shortly again had to their disclosures.

With what astonishment these official statements were received in Parliament, and what a sensation they excited out of doors, is still well remembered. Nevertheless, bare allusion to them should never be made, unless inseparably connected therewith is as often added, that on the impeachment which the 10th Report caused of Lord Melville, his Lordship, and assuredly with the concurrence of the Nation, was fully acquitted.

If faithfully written, no abstract of the exposure of corruption, negligence, and fraud, which these Reports developed, would now obtain belief: but it would be well for those who, till very lately, denounced all Reformers as anarchical revolu-

tionists, and who, to this day, loath them in their hearts, to suspend their judgments, to calmly look at these records, and to ponder over the Debates which followed on them, and on Lord St. Vincent's honest administration, — it were well that they should weigh the enormity of abuses and malversations which this early and real Reformer detected and defeated, and mark the powerful parliamentary influence which first obstructed, and afterwards disparaged his honest endeavours to serve his Country: for, besides enmity and jealousy of party, not more certain is it that the Nabob of Arcot had his agents in the House of Commons, than that the Navy Bill and Store Contractors, Merchant Builders, and Timber Purveyors, had also their representatives delegated thither to support peculation.* Nor, if we consider the frauds, the exposures, and the millions upon millions paid in Navy estimates, under the heads in which those frauds prevailed, will it be found that the Indian had more questionable practices to conceal, or larger pecuniary interests at stake.

As a precedent to which subsequent times have frequently appealed for example, — as the origin of practical reform and economy in the Civil department of the Navy, with the almost surer test of wisdom, remote beneficial consequences, in laying the groundwork for all the improvements that have followed, the Commission of Naval Inquiry will for

* Indeed against the investigation of the Bill and Loan Transactions was deeply interested the same powerful Mr. Paul Benfield, finding the same Parliamentary friendship as veiled his Carnatic accounts, and again, for favours, reciprocally bandied.

ever be identified with Mr. Addington's Government, of which it was the brightest decoration,—but the merit of the measure was exclusively, and without dispute, Lord St. Vincent's.

It is proposed that in the remaining portion of this chapter shall be noticed some other measures by Lord St. Vincent when he presided over the Navy, and such as the historical course, which the subsequent narrative must follow, will not conveniently admit.

So dissatisfied was Lord Spencer with the economy in the receipt and expenditure of timber, that, shortly before he quitted the Admiralty, his Lordship recommended to His Majesty in Council that there should be created Officers, to be styled "Timber Masters," with the duty of inspecting that important branch of naval store. Though the instructions for the measure were duly transmitted to the Navy Board, yet it was not till 1801 that the Officers were appointed. When Lord St. Vincent succeeded to the Admiralty, notwithstanding a continual order to the Navy Board to constantly keep, *and report*, a stock of timber for three years' average consumption, viz. 70,000* loads, the inadequacy of the store to the demand was such, that ships building were found to have been ten or twelve years (time enough to rot!) on the stocks; those under repair as long in hand; and many an ordered new ship, for as long a period, not even laid down, after the command to build her.

* It will very greatly exceed that quantity next war, our present ships being in all classes, of so much larger size, and of so much more extravagant construction.

The timber then supplied to the Royal Yards was either of British growth, admitted to be the best, or of foreign, coming mostly from northern soils, as Stetin, Holstein, &c., which was much more perishable. It is difficult to say of which description the supply exhibited the greatest negligence. For, pending such distress in the Yards for the material, the Purveyor of the Royal Forests complained of trees decaying because not felled, and many private offers of our native timber, although of line-of-battle-ship measurement, were rejected,—some because "not in sufficient quantities;" others, because it "would not be wanted that year;" while as to that which the Royal Forests did contribute, for sixteen years the statement of the supply, to enable a comparison of the quantity delivered with the sum paid to the Land Revenue for it, was totally neglected.* In good keeping with such proceedings, the chief supplies for which contracts had been made were for the northern oak, so spongy, porous, and perishable; thus that when at last some Timber-masters were appointed, their first duty was to report the defective state and deficient quantity of the stock they found; while Shipwright Officers as loudly remonstrated against the uselessness of that of which they were ordered to construct; and, to crown

* One receiver chipped off the mark, designating the lot as come from the Royal Forests, and then represented it as the supply of foreign oak for which *his son* was the contractor. On detecting this rogue, Lord St. Vincent ordered him to be indicted. The Bill was found, but the accused absconded. Another of the clan hung himself shortly after his Lordship's visitation of the plundered Yard!

the whole, it was proved that a receiving Officer had been for years the paid agent of the Merchant suppliers.

Yet was all this but a portion of the evil. The conversion of what was used was with a negligence causing still more lavish extravagance. The first piece of timber that lay at hand, even of an entire tree, however large, however costly, was thoughtlessly appropriated to the manufacture of whatever article, however small, however trifling; and this with a recklessness and destruction which would now-a-days be absolutely incredible. Equally improvident was the restriction of the contracts to those for timber of cubic measurement only fit for the construction of line-of-battle-ships, since to all ships of smaller size timber applicable to the largest was thus unavoidably converted. The consumption of material which this caused will hardly be believed; but a sample is offered from the official returns. In building the Royal Charlotte yacht, of the size of a then small sloop, three hundred and thirty-one loads of timber, fit for line-of-battle-ships, were absorbed; but of these three hundred and thirty-one loads only eighty-three could, by measurement, be found in the yacht herself: and thus, while the stock of the rare and costly material demanded by the largest ships was squandered, the all-important progress in building and repairing the large ships was crippled. Happily, therefore, did Lord St. Vincent call the system he denounced "*rotten*,—rotten to the core!" The valuable British oak rotted in the forests for want of

the axe; the frames building rotted on the stocks for want of timber; the ships at sea rotted before their day because constructed of such worthless perishable materials.

Lord St. Vincent's measures were, to contract for all the British oak of whatever serviceable dimensions he could procure; a rigid, responsible inspection, especially of the supplies from northern Europe, whither, notwithstanding his disrelish to it, he nevertheless was compelled to resort; but he did more; on application to the Directors of the East India Company, the forests of teak were surveyed, and the building originated on the slips of Bombay of the most durable ships the British Navy has ever possessed.

Reference will be made to but few more items of stores;* but first, the faultiness of the mode itself

* Lord St. Vincent's anxiety for the health of the seamen, when their comforts, and the efficiency of his fleets, were his care in command, has been already noticed; the supplying the ships' companies with beds made of hair, instead of wool, was established under his Administration at the Admiralty thus. It had occurred to his Lordship's Secretary, that as the beds furnished by contract to the Navy were composed of floc made of damaged wool, and ingredients of almost any description, and which, after having been once wet, scarcely ever again dried, and soon became very unhealthy indeed, after awhile were not even used, and that the great majority of the men, especially the new raised men, had scarcely any bedding to lie upon, it would be very desirable if beds made of hair could be substituted. Lord St. Vincent immediately caught at the suggestion, and directed Mr. Tucker, then one of the Commissioners of the Navy, to make his utmost endeavours to accomplish it, assuring him of the Admiralty's support.

The probability of an order to supply the fleet with hair beds

of making the contracts should be mentioned. The pamphleteering phraseology of the day does this, denouncing them with clever point, as "hereditary property," (some were in families far above a century,) "or to descend exactly like college leases, from generation to generation, except that they were more liberally and beneficially renewed."

When Lord St. Vincent's flag flew over the Channel Fleet, his censure was excited on the cables as then supplied. The Captain of the Fleet, Sir Thomas Troubridge, made a survey at Torbay, and the inspection discovered that in the cables supplied to the fleet from five to fifteen fathoms were deficient in each ship. Lord St. Vincent immediately communicated that glaring defect to the Navy Board; and he now found that the only result had been the calling

was just cursorily mentioned by Mr. Tucker at the Board, every member of which, except himself and Mr. Osborne Markham, then being at direct variance with the Admiralty, and where the proposer, as Lord St. Vincent's creature, was looked upon by an eye sufficiently jealous. The idea was scouted as impracticable, chimerical, and calculated only as an additional and vexatious imposition of insurmountable difficulty. But Mr. Tucker, who had already ascertained that hair fit for the purpose might be obtained in almost any quantity, assured Lord St. Vincent of the feasibility of the measure; and in order to ensure the commencement of what was so vitally useful to the Service, he offered to procure two thousand beds, and to tender them, in his agent's name, at the price which it should be found they cost, by way of setting the plan afloat.

With this certainty of success Lord St. Vincent was greatly delighted; and when he was informed that the two thousand beds were actually provided, the orders issued,—and of course were treated by the majority of the Navy Board with the same sarcasm

upon the Officers of the rope-yards, the very delinquents, if any, to investigate. But an examination so conducted was not very likely to satisfy his Lordship, and many and long were his attempts to obtain honest contract supplies; at last, perceiving his efforts to be totally defeated, he resolved to extricate the Country from such depredation; he gave orders to enlarge the rope-houses, and to erect machinery, so that the Dockyards might manufacture all the cables and cordage the Navy required.

Of next importance to the cable on which the ship rides out the hurricane, is the canvass with which she weathers the gale, or blockades the hostile port. It is impossible to overrate the importance of strength in this article. As soon as

and ridicule as encouraged the suggestion. Nevertheless, an order from the Admiralty the Board could do no less than obey; so the contract, with the day for receiving tenders, was duly advertised.

In order to make it appear that there would be no difficulty in obtaining any quantity, the originator of the measure wrote sundry tenders in fictitious names and in higher prices than that of his own real expense, well knowing that the Board, of which he was himself a member, would take the lowest offer. In fact, there were but two other *bonâ fide* tenders. Mr. Tucker's, being only at its actual *cost* to him, was, as the lowest, accepted; and when the two thousand beds (at some trifling loss) were delivered, the *ruse* was avowed. The other tenders, embodying a regular supply, were, of course, adopted; and ever since that, the Navy has been constantly provided with hair beds.

It is believed that all admit the comfort to the men, and the preservation of health from the change; it is certain that Lord St. Vincent's successor at the Admiralty, the present Lord Melville, substantially testified his entire approbation of the measure.

Lord St. Vincent took his seat at the Admiralty, he asserted, much against the then received opinion, that the proof of strength to which the canvass before it is received in the Dockyards was submitted, could not be such as defied deceit. That mode was by weight, according to the numerical rank of the canvass; but the weights were applied to the shoot, and not to the warp or weft; and his Lordship caused it to be demonstrated to the Navy Board that on the same weft a canvass from No. 1 to No. 7, could be woven, each capable of bearing the heaviest weight applied as the standard of strength. At last he had the satisfaction to receive an admission of the insufficiency of the proof adopted; upon which his Lordship's advice was, that for "the adequate and certain supply" of a trustworthy article so important to the Service, reliance should no longer be on contractors, but "to establish manufactories in the Royal Yards."

It is to be regretted that these, and many other like suggestions, could not be carried into effect as rapidly as they emanated. As to many of them, Lord St. Vincent did not remain in office* long enough to see his desires accomplished; but by one, the Block machinery at Portsmouth, he enjoyed the

* Lord St. Vincent reprobated the system of having only one King's Proctor, more especially after the statement made in the House by Sir Alexander Cochrane, and his Lordship frequently expressed his determination that if a vacancy occurred while he presided at the Admiralty, he would have at least three; that the Officers of the Navy might not be without some choice, nor compelled to employ a Proctor, while perhaps his partner protected the opposite claimant, as had actually occurred.

rare reward of witnessing all the fulfilment that zeal anticipated.

Whatever may be imagined of the frauds he had already exposed, with respect to that which obtained in the supply of blocks, space only permits the confident assertion that the roguery here outdid them all. After overcoming much prejudice and great opposition at the Navy Board to Mr. Brunel's plan, Lord St. Vincent at length established the constant and independent supply of this article, which has since been furnished from Portsmouth Yard, by that example of perfect machinery which was devised and mounted at once complete, by its scientific inventor, never having since required any improvement; — a machine in which, from the first day of its working, the ignorant and the intelligent have ever taken, though different, yet intense delight; which not to understand should be to every mechanical or naval student or Officer a source of regret; and of which no one has yet been sufficiently bold or jealous to withhold his admiration.*

Besides the credit of establishing the Block machinery, to Lord St. Vincent is due infinitely greater gratitude for having originated the Breakwater in

* It is well known to Mr. Brunel that the Author's Father, a short time before he was removed from the Navy Board to a fitter berth at the Admiralty, first brought the Block machinery under official notice. When a gallant member of the Board said, — "What! turn a thing *oval!* — no, that I never can nor will believe; turn a thing *round,* if you like, Mr. Tucker; but as to turning a thing oval, it is only wasting our time, while the First Lord gives us too much else to do to attend to it; and so there 's

Plymouth Sound. It is quite true, that, owing to unavoidable circumstances, the actual deposit of that stupendous mole was not begun until 1807; but there is no anachronism in speaking of it here, because it was during his administration of the Navy that Lord St. Vincent first suggested the design.

So far back as when Captain of the Foudroyant, he contemplated this protection of the port; and when she lay as guard-ship in the Hamoaze, Captain Jervis, aided by Mr. Smith, the then Master-Attendant of the Dockyard, made many soundings and plans of what he then devised to break the force of the tremendous swell of the mighty Atlantic Ocean rolling into the Sound. In 1800 Mr. Bowen, Lord Howe's intrepid Master of the Flag-ship on the first of June, and afterwards a Commissioner of the Transport and Navy Boards, but then the Master of the Centaur, made, by Lord St. Vincent's direction, other soundings for the same object. And when his Lordship presided at the Admiralty, he formally brought the matter before the Board. That was during the short peace: but occupied as his Lordship then was in reforming the abuses of the

an end of it." Query, would not Captain Rock, of Irish fame, had he shared in the rows at the Navy Board instead of in those about tithes, have suggested that instead of the three anchors, the Navy Board coat of arms should have been "the old Bucentaur of Venice, to be carefully kept in patched-up preservation as long as a single fragment of the rotten but sacred hulk remains?" And to that, would the obsolete Chinese law have been an inappropriate motto; "Whoso maketh any improvement in ship-building, let him receive thirty blows of the bamboo?"

civil departments, and thwarted as he was at almost every step towards reform, he found it impossible to commence the deposit. Therefore, to provide that the benefit which the Country would derive from the suggestion if carried into execution might be known, his Lordship addressed a memorial for it to the King in council. His Lordship's relative, the present Vice-Admiral Sir William Parker, was informed by Mr. Whitby, who ultimately superintended the structure, that in 1806 his Lordship entered upon the subject with him as one his Lordship had long contemplated, desiring him, who was known to have thought of a breakwater at Torbay, to consider of the construction of one at Plymouth, which, in his Lordship's view, was a preferable place; because not only it would afford a safe anchorage at the entrance of one of our chief naval arsenals, but was twelve leagues further to the westward of Torbay, and nearer to the meridian of Brest. From this origin arose that mighty protection to our fleet and island, converting Plymouth Sound from an insecure open roadstead into the safest, the most eligible, and most commodious port which the Country has, for a winter refuge for Her fleet, and for watching the navies of France and Spain.

The great accession of naval strength which England derives from the Breakwater, and the perfect security in which ships of the largest class or the frailest bark may, within its shelter, ride through the gale which is raising the most perilous seas without, are the theme of approbation and gratitude of every seaman; while even they whose

lot it is from curiosity alone to see this truly national undertaking, and though that should be only in the unruffled waters of a sunny calm, whatever were their previous anticipations of the value and magnitude of the work, still return delighted and astonished at the usefulness and enormity of the mass they have surveyed.

But it is particularly incumbent on the writer of these pages, before he leaves this subject, to attempt his best, though humble effort, to rectify a mistake which his father, now no longer alive, inadvertently made in a private letter to the late Captain Edward Brenton. Comparing the claims of various First Lords of the Admiralty to the merit of the Plymouth Breakwater, when he mentioned Lord Grey, Mr. Tucker, wrote "it was suffered to sleep most profoundly during the whole time that his Lordship presided at the Admiralty." That paragraph appears in an extract from Mr. Tucker's letter, at the Appendix to the gallant Captain's Life of Earl St. Vincent; justice, therefore, demands that the error it circulates be pointed out.

Lord Grey was far too vigilant an administrator of the Navy to disregard so advantageous a shelter for our fleet, and so formidable an opponent to the enemy, as the Plymouth Breakwater; and the design having been suggested to his Lordship by Lord St. Vincent, Lord Grey lost no time in ordering Messrs. Rennie and Whitby to examine and report upon its practicability. Upon the receipt of their plans and report, Lord Grey forthwith obtained the Premier's warrant for the expenditure

which would be required for the work; and nothing but his Lordship's quitting the Admiralty for the Foreign Office prevented his immediately ordering it to be carried into execution. These are the simple facts of the case; they possibly never reached the knowledge, or they certainly escaped the memory of Mr. Tucker, for it was many years after when he wrote; and Lord Grey is requested to accept this statement as an apology for the former inaccuracy.

There still remains a far more pleasing duty; one towards Lord Grey's successor, that upright and enlightened statesman, that most kind and accomplished gentleman, the Right Honourable Thomas Grenville, of stating his truly high-bred and honourable conduct with reference to the commencement of this same noble work.

One day Mr. Grenville sent for Mr. Tucker, then the Second Secretary of the Admiralty, and said: "Mr. Tucker, it is determined by the Cabinet that the Breakwater in Plymouth Sound shall be built. So now consult Sir Thomas Thompson (then the Comptroller of the Navy), and prepare an order which shall embrace every object in view; and if convicts can be usefully employed, let it be all arranged and so settled that we may not have to give more orders than one to set the work fairly a going;" adding, that Mr. Tucker need not be in a hurry, but to consult the Sea Lords, with the Comptroller, and to consider every point they could foresee.

At hearing from Mr. Grenville of the change of

Ministry, which almost immediately after turned them all out of office, Mr. Tucker exclaimed, "The Breakwater! we'll issue the order for that at once." But Mr. Grenville replied, "No, no, Mr. Tucker; that would appear like stealing a little fame. It was, as you know, originally planned by Lord St. Vincent; I should be glad, indeed, to have the merit of constructing it, *if I had done so;* but as whoever succeeds me will have the trouble and the responsibility of the undertaking, he shall have all the credit. I would not rob him of a scintilla of it."

It is to Lord Melville's administration of the Navy that this credit chiefly belongs.

FROM LORD NELSON.

Plymouth Dock, January 20th, 1801.

MAY this day, my dear Lord, which I am told is your birthday, come round as often as life is comfortable; and may your days be comfortable for many, many years. Almost my only ungratified wish is, to see you alongside the French Admiral, and myself supporting you in the San Josef; we may be beat, but I am confident the world will believe that we could not help it. I called on Troubridge's sister this day, and I find I have given great offence in not going to the long room last night; but my promise is solemnly made not to go to an assembly till a peace; the people in the yard did not believe I wished to get to sea till the winter was worn more away, and now all are bustle; I hope five cables will be on board this night; and I have borrowed the St. George's messenger and stern

cable. My cabin was finished yesterday, but I shall get into Hardy's; there are no orders for completing the ship, or for his movements; to-morrow morning will produce them. With every kind wish to Lady St. Vincent, Mrs. Carey, and all your cheerful party, believe me ever, my dear Lord, your obliged and affectionate NELSON.

TO THOMAS ANSON, ESQ.

Mortimer Street, 17th February, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks for your obliging letter of the 12th, which I have enclosed to my brother.

I have been obliged to give Lord Curzon an answer to his application in favour of Lieutenant Bromley, which, without an explanation, may put him out of humour. I therefore wish to convey, through you, *in the strictest confidence*, that I will not be unmindful of his grandson; but the promotions have been so profuse, there are not less than fifty Post Captains, and as many Commanders of distinguished merit, without ships; I therefore must make a stand at setting out, which I am confirmed in by the entire approbation of Mr. Addington. I heartily hope Mrs. Anson is perfectly recovered; and with my best wishes to her and the colony, believe me to be yours most truly,

ST. VINCENT.

TO — PIPON, ESQ.

Chief Justice of Jersey.

Mortimer Street, 19th February, 1801.

SIR,

I shall seek merit, and reward it to the utmost of my power, in every branch of the navy, civil and military; but at present I am restrained from promoting, by the very

great number of meritorious Officers on the list of Post Captains and Commanders, now and for a great length of time unemployed; and it is my fixed determination not to attend to any recommendation whatsoever, except on occasions of brilliant services against the enemy, until they are provided for.

Very much your humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR A. S. HAMMOND, BART.

Comptroller of His Majesty's Navy.

Admiralty 19th February, 1801.

SIR,

By the accounts which have been received by this day's post from Plymouth, there is the strongest reason to believe that, by a steady determined conduct on the part of government, the artificers belonging to the Dockyard will very shortly be brought to a proper sense of their duty; I am therefore to desire that you will immediately summon a Board, and furnish Commissioner Fanshawe with authority, in case any of the artificers or workmen should continue to absent themselves from their duty in the Dockyard, or in case any disorderly conduct should appear among them, to discharge the ringleaders immediately.

The same authority seems necessary to be given to Commissioner Coffin, that examples may be made of the most refractory of the artificers and workmen of Sheerness yard, whose proceedings have been carried to such a pitch, as to render it absolutely necessary that their misconduct should be very strongly marked.

As the Commissioners Fanshawe and Coffin, who have been witnesses of their behaviour, are most competent to make the necessary discriminations, I recommend that it should be left to them to fix on the persons who are the most fitted objects for punishment, and to discharge them,

without waiting for farther orders. I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

It is necessary the instructions should be forwarded immediately by expresses.

TO LORD KEITH.

Admiralty, 21st February, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

Your friends will have told you how I came here. What sort of a figure I shall make will be seen. I have known many a good Admiral make a wretched First Lord of the Admiralty. I will, however, support Commanders-in-chief upon all occasions, and prohibit any intrigue against them in this office. Health and success to you.

ST. VINCENT.

TO ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM DICKSON.

Admiralty, 1st March, 1801.

MANY thanks, my dear Admiral, for your obliging letter upon my elevation to this office, the duties of which I will perform with the utmost degree of impartiality; for I bring no prejudices into it, and as few partialities as any man who ever filled this post. I find almost all the First Lieutenants who were made Commanders on the Battle of the Nile, several of those of St. Vincent, of Camperdown, of Lord Bridport's action, before L'Orient, upon half-pay; and I feel myself bound, by every principle of justice, to bring them forward in the first instance. Seven of them have been appointed to sloops since I came here, and I have resolved, with the concurrence of the Board, not to promote till this list of meritorious Officers upon half-pay is thinned; this puts it out of my power to bring your nephew forward so soon as I wish, but I will not be unmindful of him. Very much yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. ADMIRAL CORNWALLIS.

Admiralty, 9th March, 1801.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

The manning of the Powerful and Zealous, and filling up the other ships of Sir Hyde Parker's squadron, has consumed all the able and ordinary seamen we have; and I see no means of giving a stamina to the ships-of-the-line coming forward, except by taking a certain number of the able seamen from the ships-of-the-line which compose the Channel Fleet, and supplying the place of them with Marines. Having foreseen that this measure must be resorted to when the northern confederacy was accomplished, I instituted a very minute inquiry into the above-mentioned ships' companies by a new form of muster, which the Admirals of divisions and squadrons were required to make, with the utmost degree of precision; but it will be necessary that they should go over this work again, and that an abstract of the different classes of able seamen, ordinary seamen, and landsmen, *taking them as they really are, without regard to the character they bear on the books*, should be sent to the Admiralty Board. I should hope, from the idea I have formed of the state of the squadron, that I shall be enabled to draw from the first-rates sixty men, the second-rates fifty, and the third-rates forty, upon the average, and perhaps some small proportion from most frigates; I mean those that have been long commissioned.

As it is not extraordinary that Officers should differ a little in their opinions of the qualifications of men, I think, if it could be managed, it would be very desirable that the same Officers should muster all the squadron; and if I could be allowed to suggest to you my opinion of the Officers to be employed on this service, it would be Admirals Collingwood and Whitshed, and whoever may command the advanced squadron for the time being. By this mode of exa-

mination only, can the comparative qualifications of the different ships be fairly ascertained; and with these returns before us, I should feel no difficulty in fixing the exact proportion of them to be taken from each ship, provided you should concur with me in opinion that it could ultimately be carried to such an extent. At first, perhaps, it might only be necessary to take away a part, and to call for further draughts, as the ships in which these men may be appointed to serve should come forward.

The Flag Officers must be enjoined to secresy; for if the Captains get scent of it, much clamour and resistance may be made; looking upon it as the only measure which can enable us to reinforce the Baltic and Channel Fleets, I am regardless of the unpopularity which will attach upon me. Confident of your support, it matters not what others say. Yours, my dear Admiral, most truly, ST. VINCENT.

The sooner this measure is carried into effect the better.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL COLLINGWOOD.

Admiralty, 15th March, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks for the obliging expressions contained in your letter of the 1st instant. In my endeavours to restore the Navy, in all its branches, to that vigour which can alone maintain our superiority at sea, both in arms and commerce, it is no small encouragement that I can safely calculate upon your support, and that of all honest men like you. There is much to do; and a late attempt of my great predecessor meets with every species of opposition and obloquy; I mean "a partial reform in our Dockyards," and comparing small things with great (which must come or we are ruined), I shall have a very difficult task to perform if I preside at this Board in times of peace.

I take very kind your mention of Thomas,* whose cha-

* The present Rear-Admiral Thomas.

racter and conduct are unique. With every sentiment of true friendship and regard for you, be assured I always am

Yours sincerely, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR CHARLES GREY, K.B.

Admiralty, 28th March, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR CHARLES,

Lieutenant has been playing a game to get to Ireland, which has lowered him very much in my opinion; he is brave and enterprising; but, like the rest of the aristocracy, thinks he has, from that circumstance, a right to promotion in prejudice of men of better services, and superior merit, which I never will submit to. Having refused the Prince of Wales, Duke of Clarence, Duke of Kent, and Duke of Cumberland, you will not be surprised that I repeat the impossibility of departing from my principle, which would let in such an inundation upon me, as would tend to complete the ruin of the navy. We propose to give Mr. the command of the Gem brig, to be employed in the Baltic; he will not obtain rank by it, but the daring service he will be employed upon may lead to it. You never will be well in the spring season upon the north coast, therefore pray come hither, and make your numerous friends happy; no one more so than your truly affectionate ST. VINCENT.

FROM THE HON. ADMIRAL CORNWALLIS.

Ville de Paris, before Brest, March, 1801.

MY LORD,

The French Fleet shows a disposition to put to sea; I apprehend they know that your Lordship has quitted the station.

I have the honour to be, WILLIAM CORNWALLIS.

TO ADMIRAL CORNWALLIS.

Admiralty, 2nd April, 1801.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

The French know, and have experienced too much of your character, to risk theirs by facing you, in preference to

Your sincere friend, ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS. MONTAGU.

Admiralty, 6th April, 1801.

MY DEAR MADAM,

From the incredible number of meritorious Captains and Commanders I have found without employment, I have been under the painful necessity of putting a total stop to promotion to either of those ranks, and I see no prospect of my being able to relax an iota upon this subject. The Officers of the Ville de Paris remain as they did when I left her; and my own nephew, Commander of the Stork sloop, who is reputed an Officer of uncommon merit and acquirements, stands as he did before I came into office; and I have refused to promote at the request of four Princes of the blood. Having said thus much, I am sure you will not charge me with neglecting you, Madam, for whom I entertain the highest respect, and shall be proud of any occasion to prove with how much regard I am, my dear Madam,

Your truly affectionate, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN HALLIDAY, H.M.S. DORIS.

Admiralty, 20th April, 1801.

DEAR SIR,

I am very sorry that you should have found it necessary to apply for what I cannot, consistently with any duty

to the public, grant. The frequent change of Captains is ruin to the discipline of every ship that is subjected to it; and I do hope and trust that you will persevere in a steady pursuit of a profession which you are formed to excel in, and not suffer any private considerations to interfere with it. Very sincerely your friend and humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO JOHN ROBINSON, ESQ.

Admiralty, 20th April, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR,

Upon a minute investigation here, I can find no instance of a Captain, having declined the command of a ship after being appointed to one, on account of infirmities, being promoted to the Flag; and there is a very remarkable precedent in point, that of Captain Harrison, who was Sir George Pococke's Captain in the East Indies and at the Havannah, and in other respects an Officer of the highest reputation, who, when it came to his turn, was placed on the superannuated list, he having been afflicted with the same calamitous disorder Captain labours under. Thus circumstanced, I have greatly to lament having, in my correspondence with you, given any the slightest encouragement to his hopes; the more so because I really feel a very great interest about him, considerably increased by yours. I heartily hope the present mild weather is propitious to your health, and I remain, my dear Sir, Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD NELSON.

Admiralty, 21st April, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

It is impossible for me to describe the satisfaction expressed by His Majesty, his confidential servants, and

the whole body of the people, in the conduct of your Lordship and the Officers, Seamen, Marines, and Soldiers, who served under your auspices on the 2nd instant, and all are equally well disposed to give credit to your zeal as a negotiator. You cannot have a stronger proof than in your appointment to succeed Admiral Sir Hyde Parker in the command of the Baltic fleet, on the conduct of which the dearest interests of this nation depend; and although the death of the late Emperor of Russia appears to have made a material change in the politics of the Court of Petersburgh, it is absolutely necessary to be prepared for the sudden changes which too frequently happen in the political hemisphere.

That the same Divine influence which has hitherto prospered all your Lordship's exertions in the cause of your Country, may continue to hover over you, is the fervent prayer of Your truly affectionate ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Admiralty, 23rd April, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have lately had several conversations with Mr. Addington on the subject of a memorial which has been presented by Captain , who was passed over in the late promotions, praying to be put on the list of Flag-Officers, and from everything I have been able to collect of his opinions on the subject, I can perceive a very strong disposition to gratify him.

On a fair consideration of the case, I confess, — supposing that the objection to his promotion to have been grounded solely on his not having served during the present war, — that I have considerable doubts of the propriety of setting him aside, as I find, upon inquiry, that since the commencement of it he has exerted every possible endeavour, publicly and privately, to obtain employ-

ment, and therefore no blame can fairly be attributed to him for his not having been called into service.

I have not the honour of any personal knowledge of Captain , nor of his services, so that I cannot have a private inclination to gratify one way or the other, nor have I any information of the nature of those services, excepting from the statement made in his memorial, and the documents found in this office, which, as far as they go, place his professional character in a fair point of view. I wish, however, before I speak to Mr. Addington again, to learn from your Lordship whether the objection to Captain 's being included in the late promotion rested solely on the ground he has stated, or whether any other circumstances had reached you respecting the character of this Officer that appeared to render it improper to include him in it, and shall feel greatly obliged to your Lordship for a few lines on the subject when you can make it convenient to favour me with them.

If Captain should be restored to his rank, I am not able to discover a shade of difference between his case and that of Captain , who, it appears, had frequently applied for employment without success.*

I have the honour to be, with the truest esteem and regard, your Lordship's very faithful and obedient servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN TOWNSHEND.

Admiralty, 13th May, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

No apology was necessary for the application you have made in favour of Lieutenant Lamborn, whom I know to be a meritorious Officer. He cannot be in a better line for promotion than First-lieutenant with Sir James Saumarez, who, if the enemy gives him an opportunity, will

* Both these officers were promoted.

place the Cæsar in the front of the battle, the only chance any Officer has of preferment while I continue at this Board, there being such an incredible number of meritorious Officers unemployed that I cannot, in justice to them, promote others till they are taken care of, unless for brilliant services in arms. I have the honour to be, with great esteem and regard, your Lordship's very sincere and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD CLIFFORD.

Admiralty, 19th May, 1801.

MY LORD,

There are objections, which I was not aware of, to allowing a fixed stipend to the Catholic clergy who perform the duties (Mr. Flinn has so worthily been employed in) at the three principal sea-ports, but I will take care that his compensation is equal to the others.

With my best respects to Lady Clifford, and good wishes to her flock, I have the honour to be, with great esteem and regard, your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD GARDNER.

Admiralty, 27th May, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am extremely concerned that your Lordship's wishes in favour of Mr. Grant militate against a principle I have been endeavouring to establish for many years past, viz. that no man whatsoever should be permitted to hold a Purser's warrant who did not actually perform in person the duties of that employment. I have the honour to be, with great esteem and regard,

Very sincerely yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON, K.B.

Admiralty, 31st May, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have to acknowledge your Lordship's letters of the 14th April, 5th, 7th, 8th, 16th, and 17th instant, and to express the deepest concern at learning from Lieutenant-Colonel Hutchinson that your health has suffered in so material a degree as to require immediate relaxation from service and public business of all kinds. To find a fit successor, your Lordship well knows, is no easy task, for I never saw the man in our profession, excepting yourself and Troubridge, who possessed the magic art of infusing the same spirit into others which inspired his own actions, exclusive of other talents and habits of business not common to naval Officers.

Your Lordship's whole conduct, from your first appointment to this hour, is the subject of our constant admiration. It does not become me to make comparisons: all agree there is but one Nelson. That he may long continue, the pride of his Country, is the fervent wish of his truly affectionate

ST. VINCENT.

TO H. R. H. THE DUKE OF KENT.

Admiralty, 6th June, 1801.

SIR,

I cannot express the sense I feel of your Royal Highness's goodness in not requiring me to attend to your wishes in cases which militate against the principle I have found it absolutely necessary to the good of His Majesty's service to establish. The appointment of Lieutenant to the command of the Hawke is among these, and a Commander has been sent from hence to supersede him. I do not find a Charles Watson on the Naval List: there is a Christopher and a James Watson, both of them young Com-

manders, in point of rank; and there are so many old and highly meritorious Officers upon that List unemployed, that I am persuaded your Royal Highness does not mean I should bring forward either of them to the prejudice of those aforementioned. I have the honour to be, with very great respect, your Royal Highness's very dutiful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO ADMIRAL LORD HOTHAM.

Admiralty, 8th June, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

I do not see how it is possible for me, without violating a principle, to promote any man who has retired from the service of his Country during such a war as we are engaged in, and resorted to his private practice; in truth, I do not think such a person entitled to his half-pay; at the same time I feel that, under other circumstances, every possible attention would be due from me to a skilful surgeon who had followed your Lordship's fortunes for such a length of time, and met with your approbation.

Very sincerely yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON.

Admiralty, 8th August, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have to thank your Lordship for the continuance of your correspondence touching the arrangement and disposition you have made of the Sea Fencibles, the whole of which will be left to your judgment, as it is fitting it should, from the unbounded confidence we repose in you. I am very sorry they do not turn out in greater numbers: it is understood here that they entered into a written engagement, which is supposed to be in the hands of the Captains, and, we conclude, has been communicated to you.

The public mind is so very much tranquillised by your being at your post, it is extremely desirable that you should continue there: in this opinion all His Majesty's servants, with Sir Thomas Troubridge, agree; and, happy as I should be to see you, let me entreat your Lordship to persevere in the measures you are so advantageously employed in, and give up, at least for the present, your intention of returning to town, which would have the worst possible effect at this critical juncture.

De Ruyter was intended to have been placed under your command, and orders will be sent for that purpose. Heartily hoping that you are recovered from the fatigue you have undergone, believe me to be most affectionately yours,

ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON.

Admiralty, 10th August, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

Our advices from Paris say, that the First Consul has declared himself Generalissimo of the Army of Provision, and that we are to look to Flanders for the grand effort.

The dispositions you have made, and are making, appear to us all as the most judicious possible. I agree with your Lordship entirely, that the conduct of the Sea Fencibles has many precedents in higher life, and that disinterested public virtue is a rare plant; but after being exempted from the impress, and allowed the benefit of constant protection, and unmolested pursuit of their occupations during the last four years, the Country has a fair claim to the condition of the obligation. The Amazon and Dart will be placed under your command, and every other attention paid to the important objects of it possible.

The delicacy you have always shown to senior Officers is a sure presage of your avoiding by every means in your power to give umbrage to Admiral Dickson, who seems disposed to judge favourably of the intentions of us all: it

is, in truth, the most difficult card we have to play. Pray, take care of your health, than which nothing is of so much consequence to the Country at large, more particularly so to your very affectionate ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON, K.B.

Admiralty, 13th August, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

Our negotiation is drawing near its close, and must terminate one way or another in a few days, and, I need not add, how very important it is that the enemy should know that *you* are constantly opposed to him.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON, K.B.

Admiralty, 14th August, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am extremely concerned to learn, by your letter of yesterday, that the fatigue you have undergone has injured your health, so precious at all times, more particularly so at this crisis. Your mind is superior to the mischievous wit of the news-writers, which is always directed against the great and good. Be assured, no service whatever can be of greater importance than that your Lordship is employed in; and as we have every reason to believe it cannot be of long duration, I trust in God that you will be enabled to go through with it.

I never saw any good arising from consultations, and have studiously avoided them throughout my sea life: and, in addition, there is every reason to wish your continuance on the coasts of France and England, as your judgment may direct, for the present.

Ever yours most affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON, K.B.

Admiralty, 17th August, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

It is not given to us to command success, and your Lordship, and the gallant Officers and men under your orders, most certainly deserved it; and I cannot sufficiently express my admiration of the zeal and persevering courage with which this gallant enterprise was followed up, lamenting most sincerely the loss sustained in it, more particularly the grievous wounds of Captain Parker and Mr. Langford.

The manner in which the enemy's flotilla was made fast to the ground and to each other, could not have been foreseen, and, instead of blame, the highest praise is due to your Lordship, and all under your command, who were actors in this glorious attempt.

Dr. Baird was ordered down to Deal soon after the receipt of your letter, and the Sick and Wounded Board directed to pay every attention to the brave fellows who have suffered.

Yours most affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON.

Admiralty, 5th September, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

The situation you are placed in is a very important one, and does not expose your Lordship to the elements in blowing weather; I therefore hope you will not relinquish it at a moment when the services of every man are called for by the circumstances the Country is placed in, so imperiously that, upon reflection, I persuade myself you will think as I and every friend you have, with whom I am in habits of conversation, do on this subject.

Sarcasms in newspapers are a tribute every man who is

placed in a high situation must submit to. It is evident that those I have read are levelled at the administration of the Government, and intended to deprive the Country of your eminent services. Ever, my dear Lord,

Yours most affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS DUCKWORTH.

Admiralty, 21st September, 1801.

DEAR ADMIRAL.

I am sorry that the Board does not agree with you upon the subject of indemnification for the expense you were at in entertaining the General Officers and their suite during your late expedition. I confess myself to be an improper person to ask an opinion of, for I have, in the course of service, been subjected to much of this expense, more particularly on the expedition to Martinique, &c. at the commencement of this war, when I possessed very small means. I not only had nineteen Officers and their servants at my tables every day, during the passage to Barbadoes, but from island to island afterwards, in as great number, though not of equal rank, except in the instance of Sir Charles Grey, and it never entered into my imagination to ask for compensation, nor did I ever hear of an instance of a Commander-in-chief receiving it.

Very sincerely yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON.

Admiralty, 29th September, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,

I had not heart to write to you on receiving the accounts of Captain Parker's death, knowing full well how impossible it is to convey or receive consolation upon such afflicting occasions, which time and reflection can alone reconcile. What a war of devastation this has been!

That I may soon be able to greet you on an honourable close of it is the fervent wish of your truly affectionate

ST. VINCENT.

TO H. R. H. THE DUKE OF KENT.

Admiralty, 16th October, 1801.

SIR,

I have this morning had the honour to receive your Royal Highness's letter of the 14th instant. If, as probably may be the case, it should be judged necessary to promote a certain number of Officers previous to the arrangement of the Peace establishment, I shall feel it a matter of public duty, while I leave no distinguished merit unrewarded, to confine that promotion within the narrowest limits; and as there is a considerable number of Flag-Officers now serving, whose recommendations must, and ought, in preference, to be attended to,—and others who have served under my own flag in the Mediterranean and Channel Fleets, I fear that it will not be in my power to bring forward the Officers your Royal Highness has been pleased to mention, whose claims individually, though their characters stand fair, do not place them on a better footing than one-half of the Officers of the same rank in His Majesty's service.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, your Royal Highness's very dutiful and obedient servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO H. R. H. THE DUKE OF YORK.

Admiralty, 3rd November, 1801.

SIR,

I have had the honour to receive your Royal Highness's letter of the 30th of last month, with the memorial of Captain Woodriffe, and I have the mortification of being reduced to the necessity of informing your Royal Highness that it is out of my power to obey your com-

mands in favour of that Officer, without exposing myself to a considerable degree of difficulty and embarrassment.

Since I have been at the head of this department I have resisted almost every claim that has been brought forward for promotion, excepting in cases wherein Officers have particularly distinguished themselves in action: and however favourably I may be inclined to consider the merits of Captain Woodriffe, noticed as he has been by your Royal Highness, yet I find there are so many claims for promotion from many meritorious Officers remaining unattended to, that were I to promote Captain Woodriffe, I could not avoid giving promotion to several others, which it is impossible for me to do at this moment. Thus circumstanced, I must lay myself at your Royal Highness's feet, trusting that this explanation will obtain the forgiveness of Your Royal Highness for not paying (at least immediate) obedience to Your commands. I have the honour to be, with very high respect, Your Royal Highness's very obedient, &c. &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY ADDINGTON.

Langton's, 16th December, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am happy to learn the effects produced in Beer-Haven, from the vigorous efforts made by Rear-Admiral Campbell and Captain Eyles, and I am of opinion that Admiral Cornwallis should be directed to proceed to Beer-Haven in the Ville de Paris, with powers to assemble a Court-martial, if he is not already in possession of them; and I trust that the Attorney and Solicitor-General will agree with me that, in cases of mutiny, the Articles of War authorise carrying the sentence into execution immediately in the narrow seas, as well as on foreign stations.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH.

January 4th, 1802.

MY LORD,

I cannot possibly agree in opinion with your Lordship, that a person sitting quietly by his fireside, and enjoying very nearly a sinecure, during such a war as we have been engaged in, has the same pretensions to promotion with the man who has exposed his person, and hazarded his constitution in every clime. At the same time, I admit that the command of the Sea Fencibles has not been considered an impediment to promotion; and it will afford me great pleasure if I can at any time, consistently with what is due to Officers who have highly distinguished themselves, meet your wishes in favour of Captain : having the honour to be your Lordship's &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL .

Rochetts, 24th January, 1802.

SIR,

Your letter of the 6th December is evidently written under the impulse of the moment. I sincerely lament the loss of the two young men in whom you felt so tender an interest, but I entertain too high an opinion of your patriotism, judgment, and propriety, to conceive it possible you should relinquish the command in the manner you throw out; for there never was a more critical period than the present, as it relates to the station you are employed on: but the facility with which you accommodated Captains (for both whom I have a sincere regard) has filled all your friends with astonishment; for besides the very powerful force our late enemies have in a neighbouring island, the spirit of discontent will naturally

arise amongst the seamen when they see their Officers abandoning the eminent situations they are placed in, which nothing short of actual disability to perform their duty can justify.

Confiding, as I do, in the rectitude of your mind, I sincerely hope a duty paramount to all personal feeling will operate against sudden and rash opinions, formed in a paroxysm of affliction, and that I shall never have cause to repent of having placed you in the most advantageous situation at my disposal.

I have the honour to be, with much esteem and regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO WILLIAM JOLLIFFE, ESQ.

Admiralty, 16th February, 1802.

SIR,

After many a fruitless search, I have not been able to find a copy of the letter I had great pride in writing to you in commendation of your late gallant son, Lieutenant Jolliffe, who fell in the glorious battle of the Nile on board his Majesty's ship Bellerophon, while making the most spirited and judicious exertions at his quarters to maintain the conflict that ship was engaged in against the Orient, one of the most powerful ships in the French navy.

Much as you, and every person who had the pleasure of his acquaintance, have cause to lament the loss of this excellent youth, it is no small consolation that he died as he lived, an honour to his Country, and an ornament to his profession; in paying this last tribute to his memory, I have a mixture of pain and gratification, better felt than described. I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS. ROBERTSON.

Admiralty, 20th March, 1802.

MADAM,

I beg you will be assured that nothing would contribute more to my satisfaction than to add to the consolation which you very obligingly acknowledge to have received from me. But when I tell you that the utmost I have been able to obtain for the widow of a Flag-officer is 100*l.* per annum, and the like annuity to be divided amongst her five daughters, precisely under the same restrictions that you are, you will perceive the difficulty, amounting to impossibility, of my achieving an addition to your pension. Nothing can be more praiseworthy than your conduct in the education of your children. Should your son be intended for the naval service, I will place his name on the list of candidates for the Royal Foundation in Portsmouth Academy. With my best wishes for the health and prosperity of you and your family, believe me to be, Madam,

Yours, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS.

March 27th, 1802.

MADAM,

Although I cannot admit the force of your argument in favour of Captain , there is something so amiable and laudable in a sister contending for the promotion of her brother, that no apology was necessary for your letter of the 24th, which I lose no time in acknowledging; and

I am, Madam, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Admiralty Office, 31st March, 1802.

GENTLEMEN,

From the reports which have been made by the Navy Board of the quantity of timber now in store in His Majesty's dockyards, and of the difficulty which is likely to be felt in obtaining the necessary supplies, it appears to be highly expedient that care should be taken for preserving all the timber of large dimensions now in this Country for the service of the Navy, and consequently to limit the tonnage of my ships, which may in future be built for the service of the East India Company; I am therefore desirous of being furnished with your opinion, before I take any further steps, in consequence of the Navy Board's representation, of the tonnage to which your ships may be limited without material prejudice to the Company's interests. According to the idea I have formed upon the subject, I am disposed to think that the burthen of the largest ships ought not to exceed eight hundred tons.

I take this occasion of acquainting you that it would, in my opinion, be highly beneficial to his Majesty's service, if the Company would undertake to build a ship-of-the-line and a frigate annually at Bombay, of the teak timber, which, from all the accounts hitherto received, appears to be extremely durable; and if you see no objection to the measure, I shall be glad if you will favour me with your sentiments thereupon, stating, at the same time, under what regulations and conditions the plan could be carried into execution. I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF PORTSMOUTH.

Admiralty, 1st April, 1802.

MADAM,

With all the respect and deference due from me to your Ladyship, the justice I owe to the Naval Service requires that I should make a distinction between Officers who have hazarded themselves in all climates during the late war, and those who have enjoyed lucrative employments near their own door, without being exposed to the arduous and eventful services the first-mentioned have undergone. I have the honour to be, &c.

Your Ladyship's &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GASCOYNE.

April 7th, 1802.

SIR,

The claims of the numerous officers who have hazarded their persons in all services and climates, while Lieutenant has enjoyed a lucrative employment at his ease on shore, prevent my giving him the smallest encouragement to expect promotion, otherwise I should have been happy in the opportunity of complying with the wishes of the Mayor and Bailiffs of Liverpool, and testifying the respect with which, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Admiralty, 17th April, 1802.

GENTLEMEN,

I have already had the honour of stating to the late Chairman and Deputy Chairman, with the concurrence of

the rest of his Majesty's confidential servants, my wishes respecting a plan I have had in contemplation for some time past, of building ships of war in India; and from the reply which I received from them to my letter on that subject, I had the satisfaction of finding every disposition on their part to promote the success of the undertaking.

As I am informed that a despatch is likely to be sent overland to India in the course of a few days, it appears to me to be very desirable that some instruction should be sent by that conveyance to Bombay for collecting, and preparing the timber previously to the arrival of the draughts, on which, mentioned in my former letter, viz., a ship-of-the-line and a frigate are proposed to be built. The draughts were transmitted to the late Chairman by Sir Andrew Hammond, Comptroller of the Navy. With a view to the satisfying the Company for the expense of building the two ships, I beg to propose that a contract should be entered into by the Company with the Navy Board, for some specific sum per ton for each of the two ships, the amount to be estimated rather lower than the probable price of building there, and that a private engagement should at the same time be made for making up the deficiency, whatever the amount of such deficiency may be, whenever it can be ascertained. I have contributed this idea to the Comptroller, who will be ready to enter into engagements to that effect whenever you may see proper to meet him on the subject, and to settle all the necessary details for carrying the plan I have suggested into execution; and I cannot but entertain a hope that by proper attention and management, this Country will be able to obtain annually, within no very distant period, from its Indian possessions, without prejudice to the Company's interests, a ship-of-the-line and a frigate, a supply, considering the durability of the timber, of great importance to the support of the naval strength of the Empire. I am, Gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO COMMANDER FANE.

Admiralty, May 21, 1802.

DEAR FRANCIS,

I had not an opportunity to give you a few hints * touching your conduct as a Commander, before you left town, which induces me to address them to you in a short letter.

Complacency to your Officers is the best principle you can act upon respecting them, taking especial care neither to be familiar with them, nor allowing familiarity on their part towards you: the best means of avoiding these

* It is impossible not to perceive in this letter to a Commander, who was a very young man, that excellence so difficult to attain, of instructing in detail what should be done, particularising the specific duties instead of general admonition in indistinct universalities.

The late Sir George Grey used to say, that the objection which Lord St. Vincent had to the Captains so frequently dining with the Ward-room or Gun-room Officers arose from his long experience, that in almost every ship it appeared that punishments and quarrels more frequently occurred from circumstances connected with the evening duties after those dinners, than at any other time; and the natural experience was, that by the freer circulation of the bottle than had been usual, some of the party had become heated and irritable. Sir George used also to state, that it was an invariable rule with Lord St. Vincent never to inflict corporal punishment after noonday, nor after the ship's company had received their allowance of grog.

To advice from Lord St. Vincent for service afloat, the counsel from Lord Collingwood, on retirement on shore, cannot be an inappropriate appendant: and among the hitherto unpublished letters from that great Admiral and good man, is the following to the present Rear-Admiral Thomas, who is entreated to pardon the so far dealing with his own character as to say, that, brought up in the schools of both these great sea-officers, it is certain,

evils is, to observe a certain degree of ceremony upon all occasions, which may be done without imposing restraint on them. To the inferior Officers and men your humanity and good sense will naturally induce you to show all manner of kindness, consistently with the preservation of good order and due execution of the service. Upon complaint being made of any irregularity, investigate it with temper, and never delegate these investigations to a Lieutenant, much less the infliction of punishment, which never ought to take place but when absolutely necessary, and the strictest decorum observed in the conduct of it, and, whatever your feelings are, nothing like passion ought to appear.

An expensive way of living having crept into the service during the late war, I cannot avoid stating my decided

from letters which appear in this volume, that he was also in the highest class there.

(EXTRACT.) — FROM VICE-ADMIRAL COLLINGWOOD.

Venerable, Cawsand Bay, Dec. 11th, 1803.

DEAR THOMAS,

I should have been very glad to have seen you here after all the hardships and misfortunes you have suffered; and sincerely wish your journey to London may obtain for you employment in such way as may give you a chance of promotion, and give you an opportunity to exercise those abilities as an Officer which you possess, and which would be so useful to your Country. Whenever you do get the proper rank, there is nobody I would prefer to you to be with me; but, I am afraid, there is little prospect of that yet; I want to see you in the way of it. If Lord St. Vincent knew your zeal and ability as well as I do, you might hope, for he never loses sight of merit; but there wants the occasion to bring it to his view, which your employment would probably produce.

Now that you are not employed in a ship, make employment for yourself out of matters which relate to the Service; such as the rules of office; a perfect knowledge of the Book of Instructions, which will inform you on almost every subject connected

opinion, that it has done more injury to the Navy than can be described in a letter; I therefore recommend strongly to you to limit your table to what is decent and proper, equally avoiding profusion and variety, and never to sit long after dinner. It is almost universally the custom for the Captain to dine with the Lieutenants once a-week. I never approved of it; but perhaps it will be difficult for you to decline such an invitation without subjecting yourself to a charge of singularity; and probably the lesser evil will be in complying with the usual practice, taking care not to be drawn into long sittings or familiar discussions. I am sure you will take this sermon in good part, though it has far exceeded the bounds of my intention; and heartily wishing you all manner of prosperity, be assured I am, very affectionately, yours, ST. VINCENT.

with the command of a ship; and the observance of them will bear you through most of those difficulties which we have made matters of daily complaint. The accounts of a ship are a material part of the duty of a Captain; but a man cannot have a knowledge of them by intuition, it requires a little application to know the forms in different cases: yet many of those who complain of the difficulty and hardship, perhaps never read their instructions on the subject. I am, dear Thomas, your faithful friend and humble servant, CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

CHAPTER III.

War with France.—Mr. Pitt's charges in the House of Commons against Lord St. Vincent's general administration of the Navy.—On the combination of the three influential political parties against Mr. Addington's Government; his Cabinet resigns. — Lord St. Vincent joins the Whigs in opposition to the succeeding Tory administration.

WE have been hastily reviewing important measures, of which the ramified and extended transactions were the principal object of public attention during the greater part of two years.

The Admiralty Office then absorbed the almost undivided attention of Lord St. Vincent, nor did, during that period, any stirring State affairs, excepting foreign, arise, to which it is now worth while to revert. Besides, it is well known that so all-engrossing did Lord St. Vincent find his own department, that he twice requested, — of course in vain,—that the King would release him from all Cabinet attendance, except on naval matters.

Of the yearly Navy estimates, and of the very short Parliamentary conversations with which they were without opposition passed, no particular mention is necessary. Though a considerable reduction took place in the peace, two millions and half in two years, yet the Cabinet never so diminished the

National Armament as to be disabled from an immediate resumption of hostilities. Even Mr. Fox* was "for a largish fleet." The Opposition derided the idea of peace with a man who still occupied Piedmont, decreed an army of 300,000 men; and, by General Sebastiani's report, had unaltered intentions on Egypt and India; and the Country willingly paid the tax for a precautionary force; for the ardour which hailed the treaty of Amiens, was now quite quenched by the restriction which Buonaparte had laid on commerce, excluding British manufactures from Holland, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, and Italy. By 1804 the predicted impossibility of maintaining the peace became daily more apparent. If only for Her hostile preparations, the principles universally admitted by all publicists justified attack on France. But other continental events were now crowding in, which were to develope the characteristic features of Lord St. Vincent's Naval Administration; also the political times approached, in which party-warfare was to select his Naval Administration for the point of assault upon Mr. Addington's Cabinet; because Lord St. Vincent was its chief support.

For some months energetic remonstrances had passed from the British Cabinet to France on Her continental aggressions, and on the powerful armaments which She was collecting. But when Parliament re-assembled in November, foreign affairs wore a very frowning aspect. The Minister inserted into the King's speech, "In my intercourse

* Letter to Mr. Sheridan.

with Foreign Powers, I have been actuated by a sincere desire for the maintenance of peace. It is, nevertheless, impossible for me to lose sight of that established system of wise policy, by which the interests of other States are connected with my own, and I cannot be indifferent to any international change in their relative condition and strength." This alluded to the conduct of the Government of the Tuilleries, which had not withdrawn its troops from the territories of the Batavian Republic, and had grossly outraged the terms of the peace in Piedmont and Switzerland. Doubtless Buonaparte's complaint that Great Britain still retained Malta, was well founded, but to have relinquished that important Mediterranean fortress, while France was encroaching and arming, would have been worse than folly. When expostulation proved useless, negotiations were opened with other continental Powers, and a joint representation effected, to assure France, that there would be no attempt, or even wish, to interfere with her own arrangement of her own internal government; and urging her to keep herself within her prescribed limits, without molesting her neighbours.

But a praiseworthy attempt to the utmost for the attainment of peace had utterly failed. Buonaparte * assured France, "that England could find

* A memorandum of this period's proceedings, in the hand-writing of his Lordship's Secretary, of which the Author is in possession, is in these words, "At this time his Lordship received a letter from a person stating himself to be a French emigrant, offering to go over and assassinate Buonaparte, on the payment

no Ally on the Continent, and that, without Allies, and single-handed, She was unable to sustain a war with France,"—a defiance which was contemptuously received by every Englishman. Lord Whitworth was recalled. In May the address in answer to the King's Speech was carried by a large majority; and that proclaiming war, we return to Lord St. Vincent's conduct at the Admiralty.*

Within forty-eight hours after it was known that hostilities were inevitable, Admiral Cornwallis, with thirty-three sail-of-the-line, held Brest in blockade; which was extended to all the ports of the enemy, and his Allies, from Toulon to the Texel.

France again threatened invasion. Buonaparte collected a large army in camps, at most of the ports opposite to England, more especially at Boulogne, where was collected the greatest number of gun-boats, intended to row across the Channel.

of a certain sum if he succeeded, and a certain provision for his wife and family if he fell, — his Lordship put the letter into my hand, and said, Look at that, Tucker. As soon as I had cast my eye over it, he continued, Reply to it in these words—'Lord St. Vincent has not words to express the detestation in which he holds an assassin.'"

* On the very evening that the King's message was delivered to Parliament, H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence, with the spirit which so remarkably characterizes our Royal Family, came forward to offer his professional services, urging that as he walked straight from the House of Lords to the Admiralty, he must be the first to apply for service. But Lord St. Vincent's reply was, that, as First Lord of the Admiralty, he was bound to say, that a Prince of the Blood ought not to be employed without consulting the Cabinet; though, had his Lordship's own flag been flying, than His Royal Highness, no Officer would have been more acceptable.

Lord St. Vincent's defence of the Island, was a triple line of barricade; fifty gun-ships, frigates, sloops-of-war, and gun vessels, upon the coast of the enemy; in the Downs opposite to France, another squadron, but of powerful ships-of-the-line continually disposeable, to support the former, or to attack any force of the enemy, which it might be imagined possible might slip through the squadron hanging over their coast; and a force on the beach on all the shores of the English ports, to render assurance doubly sure. This force for the defence of the Island, was entrusted to Lord Keith, having under him Admirals Thornborough, Vashon, Russell, Louis, and Patton.

It is to be noted that Lord St. Vincent did not contemplate repelling an invasion of gun-boats by gun-boats; a distinction now merely mentioned as characteristic of his measures, because its merits will speedily come into argument, in reply to a political attack, which, as it assailed all his naval policy as a war and peace Minister, the further consideration of it is delayed till that discussion.

After communicating with Lord Hobart for the re-establishment of the coast signals, and telegraph Officers, Lord St. Vincent received from the Minister instructions to re-organise the "Sea Fencibles." But to this his Lordship objected as a useless expense, tending to skreen Officers and men from active service to their Country, without, as his Lordship thought, an Officer or man of that corps witnessing the firing of a single shot. Until the impress had manned the ships first commissioned for

the fleet, he prevailed: but Mr. Addington not being entirely convinced, it was referred to the Cabinet, and there the measure being carried, his Lordship was obliged to yield a reluctant assent. "It would," he used to say, "be a good bone for the Officers to pick, but a very dear one to the Country." The result verified the prediction. The measure commenced with an expense of 20,000*l.* a year, but it was soon found to be such a comfortable mode of embarking in the war, that it amounted to,—even exceeded 150,000*l.*! which Lord St. Vincent, after repeated efforts to get rid of, used to describe as "the item of his estimates of no other use than to calm the fears of the old ladies both in and out."

It was too certain that all the Naval Hospitals would soon again be required; but with the management in which he found them Lord St. Vincent was greatly discontent; and he perceived that the medical visitations, conducted as they had been by the "Sick and Hurt" Board, had tended rather to sanction than to correct abuses. To remedy this, having found that the appointment of the late * Dr. Baird to Deal Hospital in 1800, was attended with signal success, Lord St. Vincent now added that gentleman to the Medical Board, appointing

* The grief with which the Author uses this epithet "late," can only be known by those who have felt what it is to lose a firm and affectionate friend.

While these sheets were passing through the press Dr. Baird has died. With very superior intellect, a fortitude such as few men could exhibit, and a friendship and integrity to be eclipsed by none, Dr. Baird was also, from first to last, staunch and

him also Inspector of all Hospitals, Infirmaries, and all ships in commission. But then, that the Country might have the full benefit of the Doctor's unfettered skill and zeal, he was directed to make his reports on all matters relating to his duties to the Secretary of the Admiralty, instead of to his own Board. Commensurate with the wisdom was the benefit of this measure. It would be difficult in these days, when hospital arrangements are carried to such a perfection, to obtain credence to a statement of the abuses which were then detected. The limits of space do not admit a recital of them; nor is the subject one which could be decently presented in detail; but thus much may be advisedly asserted,—for abundant proof of the whole lies on the desk, — the frauds and abuses in the hospitals, especially Pembroke, Plymouth, and Portsmouth, were quite akin to those in the Dock-yards. In the sound judgment which selected, and then firmly supported the medical Officer who detected and removed them, lay Lord St. Vincent's service to his Country: in the excellence to which it is notorious our Naval Hospitals are now brought, is to be seen both the wisdom of the measures, and the value of the reforms, which date their commencement at the appointment of Doctor Baird.

avowed in his gratitude to Lord St. Vincent, while many forgot his benefits. That to Dr. Baird's consummate skill and judgment are to be attributed the detection and correction of most of the naval medical abuses of his day, is as indisputable, as it is notorious to every man who knew him, that he invariably, to the last, gave the credit of all his own success to Lord St. Vincent.

But, to resist assaults upon the Cabinet, Lord St. Vincent was soon called upon to defend his preparations against the enemy. The Administration, in office, having now sufficiently performed the part of a safety-valve to Mr. Pitt's pressure of principle, and let an escape with a little noise; it appearing, moreover, that some of the more liberal politicians of the day were likely to give Mr. Addington more strength than the ex-Minister wished; he now applied himself to unseat the Cabinet altogether; and having resigned upon the principle that Catholic relief being just and due, ought to have been granted; he was now about to resume office without removing a jot of the prejudice of the stubborn Monarch, — without a particle of relief having been conceded, — without making a single stipulation in Catholic favour.

On the 15th March Mr. Pitt moved for certain returns, which tended to charge Lord St. Vincent:—

1. That the Admiralty had not augmented that species of force which was most particularly adapted to the peculiar circumstances of the Empire.

2. That in several years of the late war greater exertions than during his Lordship's administration were made, both absolutely and relatively, with respect to the forces of the enemy, as well in equipping ships as in raising men.

3. That a sufficient number of contracts for building ships of war were not made by his Lordship's Board of Admiralty, either for the services of the moment, or for the future preservation of the British Navy.

Such, in general terms, were the charges brought by the Right Honourable accuser; and the intention has been, to state them as fairly and as forcibly for him, and against Lord St. Vincent, as possible. The replies shall be in the relative order.

The first is the question, purposely delayed until now, of the wisdom in Lord St. Vincent's defence of the coast. His Lordship would not, as his political opponent insisted he ought, meet the hostile flotilla of gun-boats by gun-boats. He thought that ships-of-the-line and frigates were infinitely superior. Besides, he could have manned gun-boats only by exhausting the ships on the Home Service of their crews, and thus leaving the fleets of the enemy at Brest, Rochfort, Ferrol and the Texel to range unopposed wherever they thought proper. But, as to the gun-boat system itself. Whatever were Mr. Pitt's excellences as a Parliamentary orator, it seems that it is only a caricature almost too extravagant for satire, which would contrast his opinion with Lord St. Vincent's, viz. that of perhaps the very finest seaman the Country ever produced, upon a question peculiarly within his Lordship's professional knowledge and experience, and never even comprehensible by a Treasury Minister.

Of embarkations and disembarkations; of the fitness or unfitness of a rowing flotilla to navigate the Channel; of the currents, tides and half-tides in the sea it had in great numbers to cross; of their ability to quit their own shore, keep, and arrive together at a given point on the hostile coast; of the comparative power of ships-of-war, and gun-

boats; whether ships-of-the-line and frigates would in the Channel be equal to any flotilla of boats, mounting the same or even a greater number of guns; upon all such technical points, it is presumed, that Lord St. Vincent, assisted by Sir Thomas Troubridge and Captain Markham, and acting upon his most awful responsibility to the Nation, was the better judge; and his opinion was; that had, what Mr. Pitt suggested, "the meeting the enemy in his own way," been adopted, it would have been meeting him in the only way in which, if he could not escape, he would be desirous of being met in the Channel Seas: and a possible chance, however remote, of realizing the toast which the ardent Colonel of Militia confident in the bravery of British soldiery gave, and which afterwards was less excusably repeated by the Right Hon. Colonel of the Cinque Port Volunteers,* "A speedy meeting with the enemy *on our own shores.*" Lord St. Vincent thought that the harbours opposite to our coast, not admitting of ships-of-war being collected in them, the enemy was constrained to resort to the best mode of offence and of transporting troops, which his means and situation admitted, viz. skuyts, rowing-boats, gun-boats, and still smaller vessels; that through such craft, and "Mosquito fleet," to use the words of Sir Edward Pellew, (afterwards Lord Exmouth,) "ships-of-the-line and frigates would make their own way in all directions;" and that so long as our shores were protected by the concentrated fire from the heavy guns of line-of-battle-ships and frigates, every

* Mr. Pitt.

shot of which that told would be sure to sink a boat, the Country would never be endangered.

These questions being of seamanship, and of the defence which line-of-battle-ships could afford, Sir Edward Pellew's opinion is overwhelming; and he said, "I see a triple naval bulwark, composed of one fleet acting on the enemy's coast; of another, consisting of heavier ships, stationed in the Downs, ready to act at a moment's notice; and a third, close to the beach, capable of destroying any portion of the enemy's flotilla that might escape the vigilance of the other two." Again, "As to those gun-boats which have been so strongly recommended, they are the most contemptible force that can be employed. Gun-brigs, indeed, are of some use, but between a gun-boat and a gun-brig there is almost as much difference as between a man-of-war (a line-of-battle-ship) and a frigate. I have lately seen half a dozen of them lying wrecked on their rocks. As to the possibility of the enemy being able in the narrow seas to pass through any of our blockading and protecting squadrons, with all that secrecy and dexterity, and by those hidden means that some worthy people expect, I really, from anything that I have seen in the course of my professional experience, am not disposed to concur in it." *

"But," argued Mr. Pitt, "inasmuch as Lord St. Vincent's approbation of gun-boats is proved by his having ordered a certain number of them to be built, he ought to have ordered more." To show the perversion, or misapprehension of Lord St.

* Parliamentary Debates, 1804.

Vincent's measures by Mr. Pitt, will be as easy as agreeable, since it will only be to again exemplify the economy in the disbursement of the public money which marked the whole career of his Lordship's life.

For many years his observation had been attracted by the enormous cost, and wretched working of that description of craft, which was at once the most expensive and least efficient,—the hired vessels. It has been already seen with what reluctance, immediately under his Lordship's eye at Gibraltar, the armed cutter the Penelope appeared to co-operate with even such courage and energy as animated the late Sir Frederick Maitland. But that remarkable occurrence instanced only a trifling portion of the evil of the system. Lord St. Vincent knew that, from first to last, those vessels were but one unvarying source and scene of fraud and corruption, attended with still more baneful effects to the Royal Navy. How exorbitant the demands of the Contractors were, may be surmised from what, if official documents did not prove it, would be incredible, — that the expense under this head of Service, which, after the first year of the war, when Lord Spencer found it expedient, and urgent exigency called upon him to engage a few hired cutters, amounted to less than £50,000, had, by degrees, dilated itself to more than £450,000 per annum, exclusive of transports; and that in the war between 1797 and 1801 these vessels had actually cost the Country above two millions! Then they were *represented* to be continu-

ally manned, and, as such, paid for; whereas it was notorious that the moment they got into any port, where they could remain unobserved, to save the pay and victualling, the owners discharged the greater portion of their crews; and, as the vessels were hired by the month, for the additional saving of wear and tear, the owners detained them as long in port as was possible. But the ill blood which these cutters occasioned in the Fleet was grievous; for whilst our own seamen observed that the crews of those vessels spent half their time ashore, with unrestricted liberty, and being on very high wages could well afford the indulgence, that they were also exempt from martial law, and performed, comparatively, but easy and not hazardous service; the man-of-war's ship's company, had very limited leave, were exposed to continual peril, and were restrained by strict discipline. Besides this invidious and impolitic comparison which these vessels occasioned, they performed their duties very deficiently; and were a shameful hotbed for Cinque Port jobbery. To all such abuses Lord St. Vincent was the determined foe; and resolving to make his effort to annihilate them, he discharged as many hired vessels as he possibly could, until the Service was nearly rid of them, (his Lordship becoming of course shockingly unpopular among their owners and Co.,) and he ordered fifty gun-*brigs* to be built, to be useful as occasion might need, against the enemy's flotilla, but chiefly to be substitutes for the hired Cutters. They were called gun-*vessels*, but never in the least resembled the row gun-*boats*; and from these 10-gun *brigs* Mr.

Pitt drew his inference: whereas the fact was, as has been seen; that although Lord St. Vincent was aware that there were occasions when a well-constructed gun-boat may, if properly combined with and supported by larger ships, be used with great effect, and some such gun-boats were provided, yet to the gun-boat system, the defence of the coast without hazarding invasion upon the most fearful die, could not be trusted; and for the soundness of his Lordship's judgment, appeal is fearlessly made to the only competent tribunal, the opinion of professional men.*

Next, as to the number of ships fitted out. Mr. Pitt contrasted the naval force of the years 1794,

* Besides the action off Cadiz of the Alexander 74 with nearly eighty Spanish gun-boats, when she crippled some, sunk others, and drove in the rest,—it may be fairly urged, that, whereas the enemy never once put to sea in face of the force which Lord St. Vincent stationed, Mr. Pitt, on his journey to Dover expressly to see the effect of his Catamarans, witnessed their utter failure, and the lamentable loss of life thereby occasioned.

A landsman who, now-a-days, should impose upon the good-humoured patience of a sailor an attempt at proving that as against an invasion by row gun-boats, not ships-of-the-line and frigates, but row gun-boats are the preferable naval defence, would expose himself to the advice (though in well-bred courtesy it might not be expressed) which Kepler offered to him who was so dull as not to comprehend the Copernican theory: "My dear Sir, go home quietly and plough your fields." Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that, at the epoch of these measures, Steam had not developed the entire change which it has produced in naval tactics. What the hostile efforts are which that new element of warfare may induce,—whether a guard-force of steam-boats, which, notwithstanding their locomotive prowess, are still ungifted with ubiquity, will be a sufficient protection to our naval

1797, and 1801, with that of the year 1804; it is therefore necessary to refer to the Navy of each period separately, as compared with that of the alleged inactivity; and the fairest mode of placing the subject in a comparative point of view is, to state the absolute force of each period, together with that of the enemy which the Country was called upon to oppose; and then, it being a question of zeal and activity, the facilities of preparation which had been at each Board of Admiralty's command.

By the official returns, it appears that on the first of January, 1794, after one year's war, the total number of every class of ship in commission amounted to 268. On the first of January, 1804, after nine

arsenals and large maritime towns,—is a very serious question, which it is now the season for well considering. Our neighbours are greatly enlightened — it is worse than blindness not to see it; and that all the Navy of England, even aided by steam, could protect the whole coast of the kingdom, as a lioness stalks round a solitary whelp, it is folly to anticipate; and yet some equally constant protection will be expected.—The Author's father had the honour to point out to that distinguished General, Sir Denis Pack, who entirely assented to the suggestion, how, in spite of the guard-ships, few hostile enterprises would be easier, comparatively with the advantage gained, than to land and burn the Naval Arsenal at Plymouth. Had Brest been as accessible in 1800, Lord St. Vincent would have left it and every ship there in ashes. But to contemplate the national calamity to England of such an assault on Plymouth, especially if the enemy should avail himself of the gale to come across which compelled our Channel Fleet to take shelter within the Breakwater, is quite appalling! That Fleet itself could not then defy the attempt; while one or two judiciously placed Martello Towers, costing (after construction) nothing in peace, and very little in war, would restore security.

months' war, the total number in commission, actually belonging to the Royal Navy, was 351; besides a flotilla of gun-vessels, ships hired from the East India Company, frigates from the Trinity House, and which of such craft amounted to above a thousand more. First, therefore, Lord St. Vincent had commissioned 83 ships more, and in a shorter period. But, secondly, in 1794 the French had 65 sail-of-the line, and 90 frigates; in 1804 they had only 50 of the-line, and 52 frigates; and the Dutch Navy, which in 1804 was opposed to England, counted only 30 ships on the list, and only 4 of-the-line sea-worthy.

In 1797 the whole force of the British Navy in commission amounted to 429 ships, of course exceeding that of 1804, but then the Country had been four years at war, during all which period the Admiralty had had time to fit out. Then, in 1797, England was at war with France, Spain, and Holland, the latter two nations alone bringing 170 line-of-battle-ships and frigates, in addition to the French force against us. In the comparative preparations against the enemy, therefore, Lord St. Vincent's administration has the decided advantage.*

* It has not escaped notice that a somewhat, yet not very, different statement of the British Navy, appears in Mr. James's Naval History; but the figures here submitted are retained, because of the Author's knowledge that they were extracted with the greatest caution from official returns, and have been before and officially adduced, defying contradiction. It is right, nevertheless, to add, that Mr. James's statement would tell still more favourably for Lord St. Vincent.

There remains 1801, namely, after nearly nine years of preparation, whereas Lord St. Vincent had only had ten months for that purpose — notwithstanding which, let the force of both periods be compared — on the 30th September 1801, after nearly nine years of war, there was in commission 103 ships-of-the-line, 4 being first rates. On the 15th March, 1804, the first year of the war, there were in commission, of-the-line 86; in April 95 of-the-line, 5 of them being first-rates, and 6 more nearly ready to receive their crews.—

Of Frigates, in 1801	..	147 ..	in 1804 ..	100
50 Gun-ships	..	11 ..	.. .. ..	12
Sloops	..	112 ..	.. .. ..	88

And as the statement, if carried on to smaller vessels, would give a very large advantage as to the number of vessels which Lord St. Vincent equipped, it is omitted, that the comparison may be made upon the more effective force; his Lordship's in so short a period, being only 17 of-the-line under that after nine years' preparation. But how stood the Country in 1801? for that was the Minister's concern. Besides with the French, Dutch, and Spanish fleets, England was in the immediate prospect of contending with the Danish, Swedish, and Russian Navies; —in 1801, the supplies voted to the Navy exceeded sixteen millions, in 1804 they were under ten millions.

From such a comparison as Mr. Pitt's when sifted was, Lord St. Vincent need not for a moment

shrink; and that the naval protection to England which his Lordship had sent forth, may be seen at view to have been abundant; a schedule, as soon after Mr. Pitt's motion as it could be made, of the British Fleet and its disposition, in opposition to that of the enemy, is without hesitation reprinted,* because the author knows that it was originally extracted from official, and the least favourable authentic returns,—that it has before been produced, and was then conceded to be correct.

The next of Mr. Pitt's charges was so very inaccurate and unfounded, that even Mr. Pitt's opponents lamented that he condescended to such a mis-statement. In fact, some person must have grossly deceived him before he could have made it. He accused Lord St. Vincent of remissness in raising men for the Navy, saying, "that in the former war we set out with 16,000 men, who were soon afterwards augmented with 2000 more, and in the course of the year were increased to the number of 75,000 or 76,000, including Marines; but that in the present we started with 50,000 men, and that at the end of the year, our force did not exceed 86,000." And, argued Mr. Pitt, because only 36,000 had been raised in the war, whereas a former Board of Admiralty had found 60,000, therefore Lord St. Vincent has been remiss in his efforts.

It is scarcely worth while to remark, that if 18,000 be subtracted from 75,000 or 76,000, not 60,000, but 57,000, or 58,000 remain; and it is still more obvious that the Nation which commences

* See Table annexed.

N COMMISSION AND ARMED FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE,
Plymouth, of Prison-Ships and Receiving-Ships.)—May 13, 1804.

Line.	50-Gun Ships.	Frigates.	Sloops.	Bombs.	Gun-brigs of 12 guns.	Gun-boats.	Cutters and Schooners.	Armed Ships.	Dock Yard and Victualling Lighters.	Boats armed with guns on the Coast.
20*	...	5	1	..	..	..	5	..	..	.. * 7 of 3 decks.
5*	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	.. * 2 of 3 decks.
7	..	2	1	.	..	..	1	..	..	..
..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1*	..	2	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	.. * of 3 decks.
33	..	11	2	..	..	..	10	..	51 Plymouth.	..
..	..	6	5	..	..	..	6	..	..	114 Ireland.
12*	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.. * 2 of 3 decks.
1	1	5	10	3	..	6	2	..	..	..
13	1	11	10	3	..	6	2	..	..	..
2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
6	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	1	7	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
6	2	7	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
6	..	7	11	..	..	..	7	..	..	..
2	1	4	9	..	..	..	8	..	..	..
8	1	11	20	..	..	..	15	..	..	..
..	1*	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	1	3	1	..	..	..	3	..	..	..
8	..	2	1	..	1	..	3	..	46 Deptford.	..
..	..	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	33 Woolwich.	..
..	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	7 Deal.	..
1	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	40 Chatham.	..
..	1	2	3	..	..	..	2	..	50 Sheerness.	..
1	1	1	..	..	4	..	3	7	..	135 Between Yarmouth and Leith.
1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	149 Between Southend and
4	2	5	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	.. Orford.
..	1	5	3	7	3	..	4	..	..	181 Between Hastings and the
5	1	4	4	4	6	..	5	..	..	.. Mouth of the Thames.
..	..	4	8	..	1	..	4	3	..	..
1	..	..	2	1	..	..	6	9	..	..
..	..	2	3	..	..	..	3	..	..	..
21	6	29	26	12	25	..	32	19	176	465
..	1	7	4	..	4	..	9	..	131 Portsmouth.	138 Between Poole and Newhaven.
5	..	37	17	3	11	..	5	22	15 Victualling.	21 Liverpool, Glasgow, and Greenock.
88	13	125	92	18	40	6	82	41	373	624 / 114 Ireland. } 738

the war by giving 50,000 men from her mercantile marine to the Royal Navy, will less readily furnish additional numbers than if she had contributed only 16,000. But the fact was the reverse of what Mr. Pitt asserted: the number of seamen voted for the year 1804 was 78,000 men, and by the Navy pay-books of that year, it appears that on the first of May, the last return before Lord St. Vincent quitted office, the number mustered, exclusive of Marines, was 86,788.* So that, so far from having been remiss, his Lordship had exceeded the limits of his licence, by the amount of 8788 men; furthermore, that whereas Mr. Pitt gave his Lordship the credit for having raised only 36,000 in the year, he raised above 14,000 more; for, by returns to the Navy Pay-office of the 1st of March, the number of men, including Marines, was 100,636.

To the charge of having omitted to make what Mr. Pitt considered a sufficient number of contracts with merchant builders, for the contraction of line-of-battle-ships, it, at first, may be replied, that here again the value of Lord St. Vincent's opinion in comparison with that of a Treasury Minister, is to be weighed; for some contracts Lord St. Vincent confessedly did make.†

What effect the opening in the merchant yards a

* And not with the double reckoning of Marines, as Admiral Berkeley in the heat of political debate ventured to say had been resorted to.

† There were at that moment being built in the merchants' yards, 3 ships-of-the-line, 9 frigates, 29 sloops, 29 gun-brigs, 11 schooners; but beyond doubt a greater number might have been contracted for, had Lord St. Vincent deemed it prudent.

second market of rapid demand for that rare and costly article, timber of line-of-battle-ship metage, would have on its price—what on the supply of it to the Royal Navy,—whether the supplier would not exact an increased price and an extra advance of money, to enable him to compete with his rivals the private builders, while these, emboldened by their Country's distress, would exorbitantly raise the terms of their tenders on the plea of dearness of materials, — of the chance of injuring the merchant shipping by raising its cost, and thus of making other maritime Nations the carriers by sea, — of the comparative excellence of ships built in private, with ships launched from the Royal Yards; on these, and on manifold other obvious and important questions pertaining to this subject, it is impossible to receive Mr. Pitt's opinion with implicit deference. The allegation, however, was; inasmuch as the Navy has always hitherto been obliged to resort to the private Yards for the greater proportion of its force, and as the merchant-builders are now able, and ready, to construct many more line-of-battle-ships than have been contracted for, therefore there has been a culpable omission to contract.

But here arises the main distinction between Lord St. Vincent's and other Naval Administrations; it being the very essence and spirit of his Lordship's, not only that the powers of the Royal Yards, if properly applied, were fully adequate by themselves to sustain, even to increase the Navy; but that the shipwrights ought to have done it, to

have honestly earned the wages proved to have been paid to them. This was the question. Mr. Pitt's backers were the Navy Board, who denied that competency; and they referred to their own experience, exemplified by their own returns of their own proceedings; viz. to the very conduct Lord St. Vincent arraigned, in their own management of the Civil Department of the Navy. But Lord St. Vincent was not satisfied either with the sufficiency of the evidence, or with the validity of an argument founded on it. He instituted further an independent inquiry, as has been seen, into the Royal Yards themselves; and then he drew from the merchant builder the benefit of his experience. The sum of his Lordship's replies, was, — The Country voting so many millions annually for the pay and supply of its Dock-yards, has a right to expect that resort shall not be had to contract building, till the productive powers of the Royal Yards, when fully exerted, are found inadequate; and it is impossible to say that this has yet been experienced, after the disgraceful idleness, the profuse extravagance, the gross frauds, and the negligent payments, which the visitation of the Yards by the Admiralty, and the inquiry of the Naval Commissioners have developed. For the labour rendered, and work actually performed, the shipwrights are paid far more than they earn; and the official statements produced from the Royal and Merchant-yards of the quantum of labour which average shipwrights can perform and had rendered in the former, and which is invariably exacted from them in the latter Yards, prove it. It is also noto-

rious that in numberless ships which were built and repaired in the Royal Yards, double, not seldom treble the amount of wages had been paid to the shipwrights beyond the price allowed for the work they had performed; indeed, it would be impossible to account otherwise for the money which they had actually received.* For in seven years more wages had been paid to them than the established and generous price of the labour for building and masting the whole Navy; of which, nevertheless, one half had been built by contract, and one fourth taken from the enemy; and though it is true that the labour in repairs cost more, in proportion to the materials, than the build-

* The accounts, which have again been carefully examined, warranting these statements, were all laid before the House of Commons, and are now accessible to any one,—they are not presented here, because of the intolerable dulness of such calculations. But that the assertions may not be entirely unsupported by proof, a few instances are cited.

The Narcissus was in building charged at 7*l.* 6*s.* 5*d.* per ton, of which the price, by the scheme of task, was, for the shipwrights' labour, 2*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*,—to which add two thirds for the expense of caulkers, joiners, house-carpenters, labourers, horses, and the whole expense should have been 4*l.* 0*s.* 10*d.* The Diomede, built at Deptford, cost 10*l.* 5*s.* 2*d.* per ton; it ought not to have exceeded 4*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* The Stork, in 1796, cost 9*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.*; it should have been 3*l.* 15*s.* 10*d.* per ton. Small vessels have been purposely selected, because they are less interruptedly constructed. The magnitude of ships-of-the-line, and the length of time that they remain in frame for seasoning, caused a repetition of work, as some of their timbers decayed and were shifted; but, had reference been to these larger ships, the errors exhibited would have been far more glaring.

It is not contended that the scheme of prices was incapable of great improvement, and did not contain miscalculations, — it is ascertained that some double charges had unavoidably crept in,

ing; yet by the returns of the repairs given at the same period, that would not approach to an explanation of the deficiency; moreover, on the evidence, the most authentic, that of the senior Surveyor himself, from the whole strength of the Yards had only been on an average obtained repairs to seven or eight sail-of-the-line a year, and a proportionate number of frigates.

Then as to the comparative productiveness of the Royal with the Merchant Yards. Why, a private builder, employing only one hundred and forty men and apprentices, had had the impudence to beard the Admiralty with a well-founded boast, that in one year* he launched from his yard eight thousand

and some opportunities for dishonest measurement, defects which it is believed can be found in all the schemes since authorized, even to that of the present day; but it is well known to the person who ventures these remarks, that in the calculation of at least one scheme, the turn of the balance was always, as it ought to be, given in favour of the workman; while it is clear, that the defects of the prices, by increasing the wages authorized, rendered such glaring mispayments as have been pointed out, the less excusable. For it is certain that for the price allotted the work could be, and repeatedly, was done. The names of the ships, of each class, that could be mentioned are endless, and these too upon a scheme of prices paying *less* for labour than that from which Lord St. Vincent complained of the departure.

These remarks affect not the cost of the classes of ships now constructed in our Royal Yards; the comparative expense of those ships is *very great.*

* It is true that was a year of furious raging war, when of course the Royal Yards were occupied chiefly in repairs, but that will not make a semblance of a satisfactory account for the discrepancy. This contrast may be exhibited many ways: one of them has always struck the writer as forcible, and the more so,

tons more than any three of the Royal Yards! three of whom maintained two thousand five hundred shipwrights and apprentices! and Mr. Pitt himself stated, that out of twenty-nine sail-of-the-line built in the last war, only *two* were launched from the royal slips! And as to the contracts themselves with the merchant builders. Their terms and their dealings in war are invariably exorbitant beyond measure; at least, to keep them to a fair bargain is next to impossible; the ships they build are of such inferior materials and workmanship, as to become proverbial. Nor is there a more fearful source of jobbing and corruption at hand to a Minister, than such undertakings. When built, those ships perform scarcely any service before they need repair; for which repair there had generally been paid more than the previous extravagant contract price for building; and the instances cited were numberless.*

Therefore, said Lord St. Vincent, inasmuch as

because it was stated to, and admitted by, a Board of Admiralty, hostile to Lord St. Vincent's.

In 1801 the shipwrights in the Royal Yard were 3200; all the rest in England and Scotland amounted to 5200; but these 5200 kept 2,600,000 tons in merchant ships in their state of repair, and launched 100,000 tons more, whilst the 3200 royalists could not keep 500,000 tons in repair. It does not escape attention, that the repairs which a man-of-war receives, exceed that given to a merchantman; also, the scale of the difference is borne in mind; but that does not nearly account for this discrepancy; besides, the ships in ordinary, receiving ships, and hulks, of many thousand tons, and receiving in war but scarcely any repair, are included in the Royal Navy's tonnage.

* Not to fatigue by inserting them in the text: the Ajax and the Achille, after only two years' service, owing to originally de-

besides all this, I am also furnished with proof that if properly exerted, or if stimulated to only the ordinary exertions, which the identically same men would certainly make in the Merchant Yards, the shipwrights in the pay of the Country are equal to produce "ten new sail-of-the-line, and frigates in proportion, a-year, * besides keeping the whole Navy in repair during war;" first reform your Royal Dockyards; and not only will you enable the Country to manufacture for Herself independently of adventitious and precarious aid, but when emergencies arise —and they will,—a fair bargain, to relieve a temporary pressure may then, with greatest likelihood, be expected with the merchant builder, when he perceives that the skilful and judicious management of the Royal Yards accomplishes a just produce of the article for the wages paid to the labourer; and that recourse to contracts is not wantonly or precipitately had, nor for the jobbing purposes of political faction, but on fair competition, in a large open and ready market.

But then it may be asked, If Lord St. Vincent so highly estimated the productive powers of the Royal

fective construction, required repairs costing 66,990*l.* For the repairs of the Ariadne the merchant received 14,200, whereas his price for building was only 5271*l.*; the other instances which the Author could cite are endless; but the fact is too notorious for them to be requisite.

* In fact, his Lordship would have been authorised had he said thirteen sail-of-the-line and thirteen frigates, and repair to an equal number of each class. It is scarcely necessary to say, each class then was of a smaller ship than those now constructed for the Royal Navy.

Yards, why was he so strenuous in insisting that for a certain period he "had seldom conversed with the Comptroller, Sir Andrew Hammond, without introducing the urgent necessity for entering into as many contracts for building as many seventy-four-gun-ships as he could find fit persons to undertake, in every part of the kingdom?" Why did his Lordship resort to the merchant builder at all?

It was owing to the very attribute, the deficiency of which Mr. Pitt, by implication, ascribed to him; — his Lordship's forethought. Not only was his improvement of the denounced system yet to be made, the inertness of the old method yet to be eradicated, life and energy yet to be infused; but, well was Lord St. Vincent aware, that his reforms would be opposed by those very Officers on whom only he could rely to carry them into effect; because if his Lordship were right, they were not only wrong, but very reproachably so. Upon this very point the Admiralty was at open variance with the Navy Board,* who, together with their allies in the Dockyards might, for their own defence, or for their triumph, first render abortive plans, the success of which would convict themselves of supineness; and then accuse the noble reformer of having, for only hypothetical advantages, not to be realised, forced

* These misunderstandings between the superior and subordinate Boards may not only surprise, but lead to a supposition that some such may occur again. It is therefore right to say, that among Sir James Graham's first acts at the Admiralty was, to carry a bill abolishing the Navy Board, and to remodel the offices for transacting the affairs of the Navy. But in almost every department he greatly overloaded the Officer; and the consequence is, that exhausted and worn out by the discharge of duties of

into light all the defects, and cast into shade all the merits, of plans which had stood the test of long experience.

To no such hazardous supply, still less to accident, could Lord St. Vincent as a Statesman trust the due provision for his Country's naval defence. Whatever might be his own strong opinion of the value of the reforms which he advocated, until these difficulties were surmounted, until, owing to conviction, resistance had almost ceased, he was bound to provide for the *certainty* of a sufficient naval force. Accordingly, some contracts, confessedly more instead of less, than Lord St. Vincent relished, were made. It is true that at first they were contemplated to the extent of the advice to the Comptroller; but when it was ascertained that if the merchants were to render any great number of line-of-battle-ships, it would too severely drain the Royal Yards of timber, and would also give the contractors a very high "extra price" per ton, with a specious pretext for demanding a higher than was fair, or than the Country could afford, the contracts were curtailed; and for that offence, as well as that the bargain had not been made with blind wanton extravagance, the merchant builder's cry was heard, in this attack of party, against the political exist-

unimportant detail, which he now cannot avoid, the Officer has neither time nor freshness of intellect to bestow upon more important deliberations. That the present machinery would perform the Admiralty work in a war is utterly hopeless; and now is the time to readjust it; to do so, would be a great saving of public money and of valuable men, who now must wear out too rapidly by ill-judged fatigue.

ence of the Minister who had disappointed the expectations of plunder.

What therefore was Lord St. Vincent's unpardonable sin against these worthies?* or rather, let us say, what his services were to his Country, who had placed him in Her trust. It was this: that, acceding to office with clean hands, and unfettered by party ties, having disturbed the sinecure beds of idleness which the Royal Yards had become, and having let it be clearly seen that a performance of their duty was intended to be rigidly required of them; he also exposed and refused to sanction the jobbery of merchant contracts. And when the parliamentary opposition of that attack had no other object on earth than to embarrass an Administration so frail as Mr. Addington's could not but be, as soon as the

* Another instance of his Lordship's determined resistance to imposition may be thought worthy the space of a note.

In 1804, at the usual time for making the contracts for the butter and cheese for the whole Navy, the advertisements duly appeared. On the day of receiving the tenders, the terrified chairman of the Victualling Board waited upon his Lordship to announce that "there were only two tenders, both of them at nearly double the previous price, that it was evident there was a combination, and most probable that they who had offered had already bought up all the butter in the market." Any such attempts by contractors never failed to excite his Lordship's wrath, and he immediately declared he would make them repent of their cupidity. The chairman was all trepidation and alarm, protesting they did not know what to do, as the sacrifice to the demands of the contractors would amount to an immense sum; his Lordship bade him to be under no apprehension, and immediately sent for his Secretary, and in his presence told the chairman that the article butter in the victualling of the Navy should be exchanged for sugar and cocoa, which would be more beneficial and acceptable

three other political sections put a hollow truce to their own hostilities for the purpose of upsetting it; that a Minister of such great deeds to his Country, and of such virtuous motives, as Lord St. Vincent, should be requited with such unworthy reflections for measures based upon such sound and enlightened principles, and of such lasting benefit to the Nation, is what, on the laxest principles of political warfare, was perfectly indefensible; what no expediency of party could justify; and will for ever be a stain on the political character of the Statesman, who, for private ambition, conducted such an ungenerous, ungrateful assault.

The motion in the House of Commons which Mr. Pitt founded upon these charges was negatived.

to the men, and more economical to the Country; and he directed the chairman immediately to engage a broker to quickly agree on a price for all the sugar they might want for the whole fleet, and to buy all the cocoa to be obtained.

The sugar was soon found, for there was then a glut of it; but scarcely any cocoa could be procured for money. What was to be done? the men could do nothing with sugar alone, and now the butter gentry having heard of the First Lord's determination, made a private offer to the Victualling Board to supply all that should be wanted "*at the price of the preceding year;*" and this that Board recommended to be taken; but Lord St. Vincent shaking his fist, exclaimed, "No, by G—d, *never!*" in fact, he had made up his mind upon the subject, and that was, to punish the attempt to raise prices exorbitantly. So he sent his Secretary to the Chairman of the East India Company, to know if they could furnish a thousand chests of Bohea tea? The answer was ten thousand if wanted; and thus sugar and tea were supplied to the Navy in lieu of butter; which, being all left upon the contractors' hands, proved a losing speculation, and a wholesome lesson to them; while a very great improvement was made in the seaman's diet.

But by this time the whole of that Statesman's party had become openly hostile to Mr. Addington's Cabinet, and joined to the Foxites and Grenvilles,—all three having for this purpose forgotten their own reciprocal feuds—"accomplished," wrote Mr. Sheridan, "that which no two of them could effect." That some accession of party aid was indispensable to the existence of the Addington Ministry, had been still more forcibly perceived by themselves than as yet noticed by the public. Already had the Lord Chancellor, at the request of his colleagues, formally communicated to the King "that the Cabinet felt that without more strength the government could not be carried on with benefit to the Country;" but on Mr. Fox's motion on the National Defence being negatived by only a majority of fifty-two, negotiations for a succeeding Administration ensued. Mr. Fox announced, that if it were left to him, his wish would be, that Lord St. Vincent should not be removed from the Admiralty; while, by a memorandum of what passed with his colleagues, made on Lord St. Vincent's return from the deliberation on the aid which had been offered to the Cabinet, "God knows," said his Lordship about the exclusion of Mr. Fox, "that I had no hand in it;" but then he immediately added, "I do not at all know what passed between the King and my Lord Chancellor."

On the 10th of May Mr. Addington's administration resigned. On his return from the Cabinet Council, at which that step was finally agreed upon, Lord St. Vincent said, "Our only object in taking office, was to prevent the Royal closet from being

forced by any set of men, and to leave the King free to choose whomever he might think proper; which we have accomplished."

The King chose Mr. Pitt. Lord St. Vincent joined the Opposition; and except upon the question of Slave Emancipation, upon all important occasions he will be found quite identified with the Whigs.

Of the occupations which devolve on the energetic Statesman retiring from office, the course of the Parliamentary campaign threw, rather that of defending the measures for which he was responsible, than of watching those of his successors, upon Lord St. Vincent. At this period * his Lordship, and a small band of patriotic Statesmen, being in a minority so small that the cause of reform was all but lost, his own active official measures, as the distinguishing claim to popularity of the retiring Cabinet, were the chief objects of political hostility. The powerful machine too, which he set in motion for investigating the abuses of civil affairs of the Navy continuing to work after he had quitted office, was, as it were, a prolongation of his own political existence, and as often became the revival, of the strife of party, and of the admiration by the public of his commission of inquiry, as the Commissioners periodically presented their Reports through the contentious Parliament to the astonished People. No addition will be offered to the observations already ventured on these valuable documents, and on the debates they occasioned; nor, the charges by Mr. Pitt being disposed of, is it intended to enter into a seriatim examination of

* Tam sæva et infesta virtutibus tempora.—Tac.

other remarkably unsuccessful, though one of them prolonged, parliamentary attacks; among the requitals, to which truly patriotic Ministers ever were and ever will be exposed, which Lord St. Vincent encountered, and which, the party spirit against this early and great reformer having assuaged, are now only additional testimonies to his skill and integrity.

For the dismissal of the Master-shipwright of Plymouth Dockyard, at the visitation of that Yard in 1802, a Sir William Elford moved, in the House of Commons, a vote of censure upon his Lordship. The motion fell to the ground; not even a seconder could be found for it; and the silence was, and was considered by the House, a rebuke of deserved severity on the honourable member. In later times, Mr. Jeffrey, member for Poole, a political adventurer in Mr. Pitt's ranks, made, for a series of months, almost unceasing speeches and motions for official returns to inculpate Lord St. Vincent's administration of the civil branch of Naval affairs; till at length, after as many countermotions by Admiral Markham, for the defence of his noble friend, and after many discussions, Mr. Jeffrey will hereafter be found sustaining a remarkable defeat. All these debates are now purposely omitted, as wholly unnecessary; but a speech by Lord St. Vincent on Lord Darnley's motion, in May 1805, on the state of the Navy, is inserted, because of the very important declaration which it contains of Lord St. Vincent's views of the capabilities of our Royal Dockyards, and of the opposition which it clearly indicates he had found from a subordinate Board.

The debate brought the good policy of building by contract again under consideration, into the arguments for and against which measure it is not thought necessary to again enter, Lord St. Vincent's speech being cited only for the reason above stated.

In reply to Lord Melville, Lord St. Vincent said,* "The noble Lord having thought proper to step out of his way for the purpose of bringing charges against me, I trust I shall be justified in shortly trespassing on your Lordships' attention. The inconsistency the noble Lord has so much complained of, I can readily explain. I avow the intention of contracting for as many seventy-four-gun-ships of the smaller class, as the Navy Board could find fit merchant builders to undertake; but when I was able to attend the Board, it was shewn to me that His Majesty's Dockyards were so lamentably unprovided with timber, that it would have been bad policy in the extreme to have accepted any of the tenders for building ships on the river Thames; and a resolution was accordingly made to suspend the entering into contracts for building ships on that river, until the more important measure of furnishing the Royal Arsenals with timber was accomplished. I maintain that ten† ships-of-the-line may be launched annually from the Dockyards of his Majesty, without impeding the

* As this report of this speech differs much from that in the parliamentary debates, it is right to say this is taken from the short-hand writer's notes.

† His Lordship spoke advisedly and cautiously; he was, as has before been stated, furnished with official information, proving that the shipwrights then paid in the Royal Yards, had they been encouraged to exertion, could have added thirteen sail-of-the-line,

necessary repairs of ships on service, or incurring any additional expense in the wages of artificers; and when it is considered how wretchedly most of the contract built ships lately furnished to the Navy have been fastened, with ragged bolts eleven and twelve inches long, which rolled out, or were drawn out by hand, instead of bolts two-and-twenty inches long, forelocked on the opposite side, noble Lords will perceive the necessity of having the whole work of the Navy, as it relates to building and repairing, performed in the Arsenals of His Majesty.

"With respect to the ministerial communications between the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Comptroller, it is one of the great vices of the Navy Board, and serves no other purpose but to screen them from all responsibility; for when called upon to account for disobedience of the most positive orders from the superior Board, the constant reply is, that the Comptroller explained the reason in a ministerial (*i.e.* a private) official communication to the late First Lord of the Admiralty. In short, since the ill-fated measure of putting the Commissioners into committee, and the Parliamentary authority for secret measures concerted between the Comptroller and the First Lord, all responsibility has ceased, and much gross abuse has arisen in the missions under the Comptroller's

and an equal number of frigates, besides repairs to an equal number of each class every year, and that they often had rendered labour in that ratio.

Now the shipwrights of the Royal Yards then amounted to about 3300.

auspices. With respect to that person, I certainly should have availed myself of the proposition of my noble friend Lord Sidmouth, to have removed him, had not his conduct been under the investigation of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, the result of which will, I am confident, occasion his ignominious dismissal; and, if complete justice is done, it will extend to the whole Board, with the exception of Mr. Osborne Markham; for, exclusive of him, there is not one member who does his duty to the public, or is competent to his office. As to the noble Viscount's attack on me, I treat it with the contempt it deserves; but I shall consider the rejection of the motion of my noble friend as an act of great injustice done to myself."

The motion was rejected by a majority of eighty-eight to thirty-three.

TO THE RIGHT HON. H. ADDINGTON.

Admiralty, 2nd May, 1802.

MY DEAR SIR,

Will you have the goodness to take the proper steps to obtain the Baronetcy for , who is very unwell and wants a cordial. Ever, my dear Sir, yours most faithfully, ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD DORCHESTER.

Admiralty, 31st May, 1802.

MY LORD,

Soon after I came to this Board, Captain applied to be removed from the Sea Fencibles, and placed in active employment, and he was appointed to the command

of the finest sloop of war which was vacant, but in a very short time solicited to retire on half-pay. Under these circumstances, I could not with propriety consider him a candidate for promotion to the rank of Post Captain; otherwise he would most certainly have been included; and I have greatly to lament that any thing should have occurred to disappoint the hopes of an Officer in whose fortunes your Lordship is so much interested.

I have the honour to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. GEORGE VILLIERS,

Paymaster of Marines.

Admiralty, October 22, 1802.

SIR,

Many thanks for your obliging letter, and for the manner in which you and your colleagues have acquitted yourselves of your mission. I have read the minutes of proceedings and the report, and I conceive the improper perquisites arising from the staff employments have been the hotbeds of abuses among the sergeants at head-quarters; and I am clear that neither the barrack-master, adjutants quarter-masters, or squad-officers, should receive a farthing beyond the pay of their double commissions.

The members of the Admiralty Board are, unfortunately, dispersed, or the report would be taken into consideration immediately, with all the attention it merits. I do not discover in the minutes that any of the sergeants were publicans. It is, however, to be greatly lamented, that they were permitted to supply the men with slops, and in some instances to burthen the embarkation list with the scandalous debts arising therefrom. Your quotation from General Loyd's list is very apposite, and I heartily wish I could carry some part of it into effect.

I have the honour to be, Sir, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO

4th November, 1802.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been unfortunately out of the way when Captain has called at the Admiralty, or I should have shown him all the attention in my power. The Fairy being ordered to England is a very unpropitious circumstance, though no fault of his. I the more lament it, because I see no prospect of his being employed again for some time to come, owing to the great number of candidates, to several of whom I am positively engaged, and the very few sloops likely to come forward. Why he should have contracted any debt, or be likely to add to your burthens, I know not. Having fought my way up to where I now stand, without the smallest pecuniary aid from any one, even when I was a Mid., I cannot possibly entertain an opinion that Officers of this day, whose half-pay is considerably more than formerly, cannot practise the same necessary economy which marked the character of, my dear Sir,

Your very sincere and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR A. S. HAMMOND, BART.

Rochetts, 2nd January, 1803.

SIR,

You appear to have misconceived the reply made to your suggestion, of my seeing the merchant builders, the propriety of which I felt doubts upon, and certainly nothing passed between us, in the conversation alluded to, that could be considered as tying your hands from holding any communication with the merchant builders that you might think necessary, or likely to be advantageous to the public. I was not a little surprised at seeing in the newspapers an

advertisement from the Navy Board for the building of seventy-four-gun-ships, which my letter to you neither authorized nor directed, having gone no further than to shew you that I continued in the opinion I had so frequently given upon the subject of building ships-of-the-line by contract, but a regular communication ought to have taken place between the two Boards, and Official order been given by the Admiralty to the Navy Board, before any steps were taken.

From what you represent, I wish this precipitate advertisement may not add to your impediments in procuring a supply of timber for the King's Yards. All the difficulties complained of by the merchants in the mode of receipt of it, under the present regulations, I was given to understand were removed in the conference held between them and your Board, when the terms of the contracts were altered in their favour, with an addition to the price, from 14 to 18 per cent.

To prevent any further misconception upon these subjects, I must desire that your future communications may be made to the Board. I am &c., ST. VINCENT.

TO ESQ.

Admiralty, 22nd February, 1803.

SIR,

It is totally incompatible with the principles the Board acts upon, to admit of your filling an office in any of the Dock-yards, without devoting your whole time to the performance of the duties of it, which I explained to you distinctly in our last conversation; and I cannot help expressing a considerable degree of surprise that a proposition should again be made upon this subject, so diametrically opposite to the maxims laid down by the Board.

I am, Sir, your humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD NELSON.

Admiralty, 19th May, 1803.

MY DEAR LORD

I very much lament your detention at Portsmouth, equally unpleasant to you and injurious to the public service; I was in hopes your orders and instructions would have followed you much quicker than they did; the delays of office are inscrutable, and increase every hour.

Your Lordship has given so many proofs of transcendent zeal in the service of your King and Country, that we have only to pray for the preservation of your invaluable life, to insure everything that can be achieved by mortal man.

Pray take care of your health, and spare your eyes as much as possible, and with my fervent wishes for a prosperous voyage, believe me to be, my dear Lord, your very faithful and affectionate ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY ADDINGTON.

Admiralty, 14th June, 1803.

MY DEAR SIR,

My public character depends so much upon every part of the conduct of the Admiralty being laid before the House of Commons, that not only the Minutes of the Visitation, but the Report of the Commissioners of the Navy who were sent down to Plymouth on the suggestion of this Board in February, 1802, should be presented, which will show the necessity I was under of putting all the books and papers of the Dock-Yards under seal, as well as the measure taken by the Admiralty Board in dismissing the Officers.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD HOBART.

Admiralty, 23rd June, 1803.

MY LORD,

I had the honour of receiving this morning your Lordship's letter of yesterday's date, enclosing extracts of a letter from H. R. H. the Commander-in-chief relative to the defence of this kingdom, and as those extracts have reference to points connected with the Naval department, desiring I would take them into my consideration, and furnish your Lordship with my opinions thereon.

As every matter connected with this important subject has already undergone my most attentive consideration, I have no difficulty in giving your Lordship an immediate answer to your letter, and in stating to you my opinion on the different points to which his Royal Highness's letter alludes.

1. With respect to Signal Stations. Your Lordship will be pleased to understand that orders have been given, some time since, for re-establishing all the Signal Stations on the coast; and that most, if not all of the Officers, have already arrived at their posts.

By a letter received a few days ago from Lord Keith, a copy of which I enclose, his Lordship has proposed that an additional number of Stations shall be occupied, viz. one at Channel, on the coast of Essex; and another at Shellness, in the Isle of Sheppey; and as it appears to the Board of Admiralty that the chain of communication might thereby be more readily kept up, the necessary direction was given for erecting Signal-posts at these places.

2. The re-establishing the corps of Sea Fencibles, for the defence of the coast, has hitherto been deferred, in order to give an opportunity to the Officer employed on the Impress-service of securing as many of the seamen or sea-

faring men employed on the coast as possible, for the general service of the fleet, the equipment of which, your Lordship is aware, has been considerably retarded by the want of those classes of men, of which description most of the people who served in Sea Fencibles during the last war were composed: but as so large a naval force is now ready, I see no difficulty in re-establishing that corps, under such regulations as, from experience, a corps of that description may be expected to be, under such regulation as the Board is authorised to establish; and as soon as the necessary arrangements are made, which will be complete in the course of a day or two, I shall take care to communicate them to your Lordship.

3. With regard to the naval preparations which are made for the defence of the southern and eastern districts, your Lordship will see by the enclosed list the disposition of all H.M.S. ships and vessels stationed from Ushant to Plymouth and the Downs, and thence to the northward.

The Antelope and other vessels which have been stationed in Thornley Bay, under the orders of Sir Sidney Smith, have lately been detached from thence on a temporary service, but it is the intention of the Board to order him to resume his station as soon as possible.

In the disposition which I have before alluded to, your Lordship will find that there is a chain of cruisers stationed along the coast, from Ushant almost to the Texel, and it is the intention of the Board of Admiralty to increase the number of small cruisers, particularly in the narrow part of the Channel, as soon as a further number of vessels of a proper class can be got ready, and for which every exertion will be made.

The ships and vessels stationed to the northward of the port of Horn, and between that place and Dunkirk, excepting the ships named in the margin, (Amazon, Hydra, Cerberus, Orpheus,) will rendezvous in the Downs, or under Dungeness; and I have proposed to the Board to

send orders immediately to their several commanders to communicate, from time to time, to the commanding Officers of the district all the information they may be able to obtain, and to co-operate with them in every measure they deem likely to be of advantage to the public service, or tend to frustrate the designs of the enemy in case a landing should be attempted on any part of the coast.

It must have already occurred to your Lordship, that a variety of circumstances may arise which may render it advantageous to make alterations in the present disposition of the ships and vessels employed on the different stations, but this will be done as seldom as possible; and in the cases in which the measure may be judged necessary, your Lordship may rely that care will be taken to replace such ships by others equally fit, and by Officers competent to every part of the service required of them.

I enclose a chart of the entrance of the Thames, with the disposition of the ships and vessels which have been placed there for defending the different passages leading to that river and the river Medway, together with a code of signals established between His Majesty's ships and the Signal Stations on the coast.

I have the honour to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD KEITH.

Admiralty, 5th July, 1803.

MY DEAR LORD,

You will see by the debates in the House of Lords that some of our brethren think the invasion will be attempted immediately: I am not of the number. Nevertheless, it is good policy to make every possible preparation for the event, which, I know full well, your active mind is incessantly occupied with.

Ever yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT NELSON.

Rochetts, 21st August, 1803.

r DEAR LORD,

I am assured by Mr. Marsh, Chairman to the Victualg Board, that a large supply of casks is sent out for ır squadron, but, without due economy, nothing we can nish will suffice: I well know that your Lordship will force it to the utmost of your power. The store-ships ı loading with cordage, sails, &c. and will sail the mont they can be got ready. These you can never be in nt of while we are in possession of Malta, which will pply the squadron abundantly; and I have no idea, der the vigour of your character, that there will be any aginary difficulty, — real ones cannot exist; in short, *dage may be manufactured at sea.* Caulking, and every litment, which, in England, requires Dock-Yard inspecn, your Lordship knows is much better performed by e artificers of the squadron; and, barring accidents by ıot, there is nothing that cannot be provided for.

I am yours affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO OSBORNE MARKHAM, ESQ.

Rochetts, 24th August, 1803.

R,

In selecting you for a seat at the Navy Board I was verned by zeal for the good of the public, and I feel conent that you will discharge the functions of the office in manner honourable to yourself and beneficial to your ›untry: happy, at the same time, that the choice fell ›on a member of a family for which I entertain the high-t esteem. I am, Sir, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR W. SCOTT.

Rochetts, 25th August, 1803.

SIR,

I apprehend that the grievance complained of is, the practice of Proctors out of Court; and that, until the Officers of the Navy are permitted to nominate their own Proctors — a privilege possessed by Privateers — there is every reason to believe that their suspicions will remain; for I am convinced that they are fully impressed with the idea that the collusion represented by Captain Cochrane in 1798 has never ceased, and that many appeals, productive of ruinous expense, have been occasioned by it; and when once an opinion of this sort has taken root, whether well or ill-founded, it is no easy matter to remove it. In any event I do not feel that the Admiralty Board possess the right of interfering with the privilege which has been exercised on this occasion, of petitioning Parliament.

I am, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. J. H. ADDINGTON.

Admiralty, 2nd September, 1803.

SIR,

Any proposition that comes from you is justly entitled to every consideration I can give it, the more especially when both you and Mr. Adams (for whom I entertain the highest esteem and regard) are interested in the event.

I have always discouraged the plans of concerted resignations of public employments in favour of particular persons, because the service of the public has suffered in an excessive degree by such management; and Mr. not having served long enough in the office he holds to entitle him to a provision from government, some consideration must be made by him to Mr. to

induce his resignation; and I am persuaded that you will agree with me that this system of jobbing is big with injury wherever it obtains.

These offices have been filled by Pursers since I have presided at this Board, and I am very anxious not to depart from a principle so well founded; at the same time I beg leave to assure you that there is no person existing I would sooner abandon it in favour of than the man recommended by you and Mr. Adams; for I am, with great truth,

Very faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. CHARLES YORKE.

21st October, 1803.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks for both your communications: the person who proposes gun-vessels of a new construction is not well informed of the cause of our flotilla not having succeeded in destroying those of the enemy, which did not arise from their draught of water, but from the powerful batteries on the coast; and I very much doubt whether those he proposes are calculated for our seas; he is certainly mistaken in supposing that any number of them would release our frigates from the service they are performing on the coast of the enemy.

We have so great an extent of coast exposed to a descent, that it is physically impossible to put the whole in a state of defence; the parts nearest the capital appear to me to merit the greatest degree of attention; the navigation up to Lynn is intricate, and extremely dangerous; nevertheless it may be advisable to arm the boats and small vessels employed in and about the port with carronades. Our great reliance is on the vigilance and activity of our cruizers at sea, any reduction in the members of which, by applying them to guard our ports, inlets, and beaches, would, in my judgment, tend to our destruction.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN.

Rochetts, 8th December, 1803.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am glad to learn that Mr. Whitby is ordered to Leith; and when he has finished there, he may cross over to Workington, Maryport, and Whitehaven. I agree with the Board, that the disorders in the Penelope can only be cured radically by putting that ship out of commission. Her crew will go a great way to man the two line-of-battle ships fitting out in the Thames. Captain Cunningham is certainly the fittest person to concert with Lord Keith the means of watering the ships in the Downs with greater despatch.

John Morrison, the unfortunate man under sentence of death, having committed the crime he was expressly sanctioned to prevent, appears to me much more guilty than the person who went off with him. It does not appear by the minutes in what manner he was apprehended; but had there been anything favourable to him, he would no doubt have stated it in his defence. I am, therefore, of opinion that the pardoning him might have a bad effect in the present circumstances of the war. I wish, however, that each member of the Board should be called upon for his opinion; for I have known instances of the execution of men for deserting producing the very contrary effect intended; and, upon one occasion, of a whole boat's crew, who were sent to bury a man who was hanged for deserting, committing the same crime the instant they had performed this last office.

Yours very truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS.

Admiralty, 18th December, 1803.

MADAM,

I bow with respect to the witty sarcasms you have judged fit to exercise upon me; yet feeling I have not merited them, I must, in justification, claim the right to state that one of the first acts after I came into office was to employ Captain and afterwards to promote him; which I should have thought might have exempted me from the reproach of overlooking old friends, and a charge of its proceeding from too rapid a flow of honours on,

Madam, your very obedient, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. CAPTAIN

Admiralty, 20th December, 1803.

SIR,

Nothing can exceed the astonishment which the perusal of yours to me of the 17th instant has excited. The doctrines contained in it are of the most dangerous and mischievous tendency, and I feel that I am acting improperly in not immediately laying them before the Board; but as such a measure must be productive of the most serious consequences to you as an Officer, I refrain from resorting to it, in hopes that you will in future consider obedience to the orders you receive as the only principle of your duty. I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON.

Rochetts, 24th December, 1803.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is lamentable not only with respect to him, but the service at large, that this disposition to discuss has taken

place of the implicit obedience which once formed the character of a Sea Officer; and if not put down, will inevitably be the destruction of naval discipline.

Yours, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ELLIOT, R.M.

Rochetts, 1st January, 1804.

SIR,

In recommending you to His Majesty for the command of a division, I felt that I was performing an act of justice to a brave soldier, and an upright man, who would exert himself to correct the abuses which have crept into the Staff department of the Royal Marines, whereby the embarkation lists have been loaded with heavy debts, and, in other instances, the public have sustained material loss; and I persuade myself your attention will be pointed to the charges of the Deputy-paymaster, Barrack-master, and Quarter-master, in order to put a stop to unauthorized emoluments, and to the advance of pay on embarkation,—a scandalous practice, equally disgraceful to the corps, and injurious to the men. I am, Sir, &c., ST. VINCENT.

TO LORD MINTO.

Admiralty, 2nd January, 1804.

MY DEAR LORD,

You have no doubt been a great deal surprised at the silence I have held upon the subject of your son's appointment to the Maidstone. The fact is, that I had written to Lord Nelson, naming the Captains Durban and Hillier (Commanders of long standing and of great merit, neither of whom I ever saw, and I know them by reputation only) as the persons who were to fill the first vacancies of Post-captains, and this was followed by a public letter from the

a Lieutenan
being in valid
into it but will
more active s
battle is over
much longer
keeps me up a
Hamilton's Le
subject to, but
Dear and you

We have only a s
escort Kent and

London, Richard B.

a Colonny & the Medoz
I have just Mr. Seymour
change him for a
ship the moment the
which cannot be
dispensed, this transport
under a nearly Comp
we always been
I am always truly
& faithful friend
Nelson & Brontë
The man in the fleet
I has been to Malta

antley, New Burlington St. 184

Board to the same effect. His Lordship not having written to me when he gave Captain Elliot an acting order to command the Maidstone, I was under the necessity of waiting an explanation, before I could recommend a commission to be made out for my young friend. A satisfactory one is now arrived, and the needful will be done forthwith. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO ESQ.

Admiralty, 3rd January, 1804.

MY DEAR SIR,

There are few things Sir John Colpoys could advise, or you require of me, that I would not most readily comply with; but the case of Lieutenant ——, in whose fortunes I also have felt a strong interest, is unfortunately of a description that cannot be treated lightly. He was stationed for the protection of the Pilchard Fishery and trade round land into Mount's Bay, and found his way to Cape Finisterre, abandoning the important duty he was employed upon, with a view to his private emolument; and the Board was in great doubt whether he should not be proceeded against in the most rigorous manner. Yours most truly,

ST. VINCENT.

TO THE EARL OF ANNANDALE.

Admiralty, 24th February, 1804.

LORD ST. VINCENT presents his compliments to Lord Annandale, and acquaints his Lordship that some Officers of the Royal Marines having been presented who had distinguished themselves in quelling mutinies during the late war, his Lordship, in justice to such meritorious services, has given them the late vacant Staff appointments in preference to every other candidate.

TO H.R.H. THE DUKE OF YORK,

Commander-in-Chief, &c.

Admiralty, 6th April, 1804.

SIR,

I have the honour to acquaint your Royal Highness that having made the necessary inquiry, I do not find that any application for the Major-General has been made to the Board of Admiralty, and consequently no orders of that nature could have been given to Captain Baynton; but your Royal Highness will allow me to observe, that with every disposition in the Board to assist and forward on all occasions the military service, they cannot help feeling considerable reluctance when under the necessity of ordering Officers commanding His Majesty's ships to receive into their cabins, and accommodate at their tables Officers belonging to another branch of the Service, who may not only be unknown to, but personally unpleasant to them; and though in numerous instances during the present war they have given such orders, they have entertained the hope that the representation they have occasionally been induced to make on this subject would prevent the recurrence of applications for the passages of military Officers in ships of war, unless under circumstances of urgent necessity. It is therefore with much satisfaction I learn that your Royal Highness has acquiesced in the Major-General's request to take his passage to Malta in a store-ship.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, Sir,

Your Royal Highness' dutiful and obedient servant,

ST. VINCENT.

CHAPTER IV.

Death of Captain Jervis.—On the return of the Whigs to office Lord St. Vincent accepts the command of the Channel Fleet.—His Lordship is detached on a Special Mission to Lisbon—The King changes his Ministers, whereupon Lord St. Vincent retires from the Channel Fleet and from sea service.—His interview with the King upon that occasion.

EARLY in the year 1805 Lord St. Vincent was in grief for the loss of his nephew, Captain William Henry Jervis, the presumptive heir to the title, who was drowned off Brest while passing on duty in his boat from the San Josef to his own ship, the Tonnant; it was blowing a gale of wind, with much sea running, and the boat filled and sank. A single sentence in a letter to Mrs. Ricketts, the distressed mother, sufficiently exhibits Lord St. Vincent in affliction: "I was so overwhelmed, I could with difficulty write a sentence to my wife or mother; my attention to the two orphans, for in the eye of the law these dear little girls are so, will be redoubled." It should seem that this domestic calamity weighed so heavily, that for some time it even prevented his Lordship from finding employment for the mind in public business, confining him to the country; for except to provide for his

proxy, which Lords Grey or Moira held, he does not appear to have been in London. In October came the battle of Trafalgar, the zenith of fame, and the glorious death of Lord Nelson, of which Lord St. Vincent thus wrote to his Secretary, "Lord Collingwood has done himself immortal honour by his conclusion of the battle, which Nelson so nobly began. Writing to you privately, I suppose I may confess that I do feel *a* pride in this great victory beyond the general exultation. I was prepared for anything great from Nelson, but not for his loss."*

In January 1806 Mr. Pitt died: a short time before his decease a communication from his Cabinet was made through Lord Sidmouth to Lord St. Vincent, that the Government wished he would re-assume the command of the Channel Fleet. At this

* The diversity of the excellences of these great men are now familiar to, and acknowledged by, every one. What was so exceedingly fortunate for England was, the order of their appearance in Her Navy; that the stern strong-minded disciplinarian perfecting the Fleet, should have preceded the amiable kindly natured Hero who led it to victory,—that the instruction by Lord St. Vincent should have formed Lord Nelson to outshine his master.

In conversing about their comparative merits, the eminent Rev. Dr. Parr, thus expressed himself: "Lord St. Vincent was a great man, and the ablest Naval Officer which the Country has produced. He was the master and instructor of Nelson, who was a great Hero, but with less grasp of mind than Lord St. Vincent, and more relaxed in his morals than I could tolerate, though I allow great latitude to gentlemen of your profession. St. Vincent, I say, was the tutor of Nelson: he taught and formed him; mark me, he formed him; he made him a greater man than himself, and then did not envy him."

his Lordship spurned, in language sufficiently unceremonious and decisive; but on the accession to office of the Whig Statesmen of every shade of Whig politics, Lord St. Vincent testified his support to Lord Grenville's administration, by accepting that command; and the Cabinet deemed that on the appearance afloat of a once First Lord of the Admiralty, the Union Jack at the main, as now the Admiral of Fleet, was the becoming flag for his Lordship to hoist. His Lordship's relative, Mr. John Parker, was the Secretary; Rear-Admiral Osborne was Captain of Fleet; the Hibernia, 110, Captain Western, bore the flag in February.

The peculiar service which a sudden change in Continental affairs imposed upon this fleet was, of itself, that which would exclude any other Admiral from eligibility to command, than an Officer of the highest order; but another and far greater importance attaches itself to Lord St. Vincent's return to active service, and to this important station. Officers who had the advantage of again serving under his flag will remember that he exhibited, the same inflexible firmness, the same resort to strong measures to put down refractoriness, the same prompt promotion-inspiriting enterprise, the same thoughtfulness to protect his thoughtless seamen, the same care for their health, the same enforcement of the constant presence of the Captain in his ship, the same close attendance of a commissioned Officer on whatever duty was going on; in a word, the same system of that rigid discipline which equally required obedience, regularity, and order, from every

man in the fleet; again, they will remember, that to hold Brest in strict blockade, the Admiral gave out precisely the same rendezvous, commanded the same order of sailing, the same tack or wear, all Officers being present on deck at night, assigned to his squadrons precisely the same stations, and required the same prompt refit from the ships individually, as characterised his former command here. And this is infinitely more worthy grave reflection, because returning to this station with the same force and activity of mind, Lord St. Vincent now added to them the important advantage of having felt at the Council Boards of the Cabinet and of the Admiralty the effect on the deliberating Minister and on the Country, which the conduct of the executive Officer must always produce, more especially of that Officer who is so immediately close under public observation as the Admiral of the Channel Fleet. That is to say, upon reconsideration, and with additional knowledge, he emphatically ratified his former opinions; doing so when, to use Mr. Gibbon's language of the old Roman General, "his valour was not chilled by age; his prudence was matured by experience."

To reprint such orders would be useless; in some respects, indeed, such as the care for the sick, the distance allowed to the Officer from the margin of the sea, the constant presence now of two Lieutenants of the Watch on deck in line-of-battle-ships, they were still more stringent, but the general conduct of the fleet was precisely similar; and that fact, together with another important one, that on

the Cabinet for a short time withdrawing the squadron under Captain Keats from before Rochfort, a French squadron with Jerome Buonaparte and land force in it,* escaped otherwise inevitable capture, are warnings which the events of Lord St. Vincent's life have left unalterable and never-to-be-forgotten. For as surely as Portugal, taught by the mighty General, will point to the lines of Torres Vedras for resistance to French invasion; will England refer to the conduct of this, her consummate Admiral, should She ever again summon a Channel Fleet to protect Her from the formidable Brest.

About this period the protracted attack on Lord St. Vincent's naval administration, by Mr. Jeffrey, the member for Poole, terminated in his utter failure. Into the statements, counter-statements, and arguments of this now unimportant accusation, it is not thought worth while to enter, nor to even abstract the overpowering defences in debate which

* The Sea Officers at the Admiralty ought, by their irresistible remonstrance, to have prevented this blunder.

Whether the First Lord of the Admiralty should always be a sailor; also whether he should be invariably, or never, a member of the Cabinet; are questions which bring those on which no Premier will or ought to be fettered with; there is neither space nor use to discuss here, nor indeed can the whole bearing of them ever be surveyed, till it is given to us to foresee the conjunctures and the men for them, which futurity will produce. But, that the Navy should be rescued from the destructiveness of the frequent change of system, inseparable from the present brief tenure of Admiralty Office; is as certain, as it is manifest how infinitely more efficient and economical is the home management of our Army under Officers whose life at their Board is not dependent upon the breath of politics.

Lord Howick and Captain Markham made of their noble friend. An impression, which no weight of argument could do away with, might be left by so much controversy; a suspicion, which never otherwise could arise, might be excited; that there really was something to refute *: whereas, in perfect certainty that he amply consults Lord St. Vincent's reputation, the biographer confidently leaves the debates to the most jealous examination; contenting himself with saying, that this attack, first threatened in May 1805, was to Lord St. Vincent's almost ungovernable impatience, delayed till May 1806; and that then Mr. Jeffrey's resolutions being all negatived without a division, the House of Commons, on Mr. Fox's motion, immediately resolved, "That the conduct of the Earl of St. Vincent in his late naval administration has added an additional lustre to his exalted character, and is entitled to the approbation of this House."

The Continental events of 1806 were many and memorable, and again their effect was perceptible in services which they imposed on the British Channel Fleet. The victory of Austerlitz and the peace of Presburgh having been to his Empire, what the victory of Marengo and the peace of Luneville were to his Consulate, Buonaparte had again leisure to turn his armies against States of subordinate importance; the States in whose independence Great Britain, of all kingdoms, is most deeply concerned. An army of 30,000 men, already

* "The calumny," beautifully says Mr. Moore somewhere, "remains embalmed in the defence long after its own ephemeral life is gone."

cantoned at Bayonne, threatened to march upon Lisbon. It was also manifest that Spain, which should have been the barrier to it, would only be a source of danger; most probably She would not as much as contemplate,—it was certain She could not accomplish, resistance; perhaps She might even assist the invader. But Portugal was now England's almost only remaining European ally: the British Cabinet therefore determined to at least proffer succour to the House of Braganza, with demonstration that it was at hand. An embassy to negotiate on this basis, supported by a strong squadron and a large body of troops, was immediately to be despatched to the Tagus; at the same time secret instructions were given to enforce prompt and vigorous measures, should they become absolutely necessary; for, should Portugal become French territory, the first step towards rendering her aggressively harmless was, to render her, navally, powerless; that, should Buonaparte enter the city of Lisbon, he should find no fleet in the Tagus; the unimportance of his gain, to be in proportion to the unimportance of England's loss.

With experience in Cabinet deliberations, and admirable address in managing men; with weight at the Court of Lisbon, and great popularity among the Portuguese; with courtesy in co-operating with troops, and perfection in command when decision promptitude and energy were required; Lord St. Vincent (it is no derogation to them to say it) was not merely beyond all his brother-officers of that day incomparably the fittest for this occasion;

but, — does partiality dare too hazardous a question?—did ever England send forth such an Admiral as his Lordship when he then sailed up the Tagus?

When his Lordship committed the blockade of the Port of Brest and the main body of his force to the direction of his second in command, Sir Charles Cotton, he gave those orders for the conduct of the Fleet and the maintenance of the station which have been before recited. Lord Strangford was joined in the embassy, and the instructions may in short outline thus be stated:

In the execution of this important service, his Lordship was to keep in view the following contingencies:

1. If the Portuguese Government should, contrary to the expectation entertained in this Country, be able to make effectual exertions for their own defence, either singly or in co-operation with Spain, the British forces would render such assistance as might be in their power.

2. If the Portuguese Government, being convinced that resistance being impracticable, should take the resolution which it was understood to have contemplated in the late war, of removing themselves, with ships, forces, and stores, to the Brazils, and which could only be done with the aid of a British Fleet, his Lordship would be able to co-operate with them for that purpose.

3. If the Court of Lisbon wanted sufficient resolution to adopt either of those measures, it would be absolutely necessary, in that extreme case, to

prevent, as far as possible, so great an accession of force, particularly of naval force, from passing to the enemy, together with the unresisted possession of the port of Lisbon: and to frustrate such a result, his Lordship was to be prepared to bring away the Portuguese ships of war, together with the Brazilian, and all other shipping capable of being made serviceable; also the persons and property of the British Factory, as well as the Court itself, if, even in the last moment, they should so decide.

For the accomplishment of these objects the troops ready to embark in England were to follow his Lordship immediately to the Tagus, but the utmost secresy was enjoined, to prevent any intimation of their expected arrival, which might induce the French Minister and party there to urge measures of precaution against the operation of the British forces. The Admiral was instructed to possess himself of every information, in addition to his own knowledge of the place and people, that might be most useful to the Commanding Officer of the land forces, and might enable him to act promptly on their arrival. It was likewise deemed expedient that the Marines and boats of the squadron should always be as ready to assist in such service as might be possible without giving alarm. His Lordship was further apprised that it was probable a Minister would be sent immediately upon a special mission to Lisbon, to co-operate in such representations or negotiations as might be necessary, and with whom his Lordship was to maintain the most unreserved

confidence on all the objects contemplated in his instructions.

The detached squadron anchored before Lisbon in August. During this period of Lord St. Vincent's services, the Author's father was at the Admiralty; there are therefore none of those glimpses at the Admiral personally, which so accurately discern character; but an eye-witness has authorised the assertion, that now, at the advanced age of seventy-two, Lord St. Vincent possessed in a remarkable degree the faculty of being able, while surrounded by friends and within hearing of interesting anecdote, to write with perspicuity on important subjects without losing the thread of the conversation; and even to pen a secret despatch himself while he dictated on two other subjects, to a Secretary on one, to an amanuensis on the other, side of his table! For the above reason, no authentic memoranda are at hand of what would have been Lord St. Vincent's plans, had he been called upon to act; but this deficiency the sketches by Lord Brougham, who accompanied the Commission to Lisbon, in a great degree supply.

"When he went to the Tagus at the head of the expedition, and the Commission in 1806, the object being, in case Portugal proved indefensible against the threatened French invasion, to make the royal family and principal nobility transfer the seat of government to the Brazils; the proceedings of this Chief, in his two-fold capacity of Captain and Statesman, were justly remarked for the great talents and address they exhibited. He began by cutting off all

communication between his fleet and the land; this he effected by proclaiming an eight-days' quarantine. His colleagues in the Commission having joined him, he still prevented his officers and men from landing, but threw open all his ships to the natives of the place, whose multitudes never ceased pouring through those gallant vessels, lost in admiration of their beauty, their resistless force, and the perfect discipline of their crews. With the Court his intercourse now began; and the terror of his name, even without his armament, would there have made him supreme. The reluctance to remove was, of course, universal and deep-rooted; nor could any arrangement the expected invader might offer prove less palatable than expatriation and banishment for life across the Atlantic to pampered voluptuaries, the extent of whose excursions had hitherto been the distance between the town and the country palace. But he arranged everything for their voyage, and he was quite ready to compel their embarkation. His plan would have exposed his own person to some danger, but would have required no application of military force, if nothing was attempted against the fleet. It seemed to have been borrowed from the celebrated seizure, by Cortez, of the Emperor Montezuma's person in his capital of Mexico; and the very few to whom he communicated it, while struck with the boldness of the design, saw that it was as happy as it was bold, and had no doubt whatever of its perfect success."*

But the storm, though clearly foreseen, did not

* Lord Brougham's Sketches, Second Series.

break quite so soon over Portugal as was expected; and in October Lord St. Vincent was ordered to resume his command before Brest.

Almost the first letters which he received after his return to his station announced the illness of Mr. Fox, which led to his death in October. But should this calamity happen, it might terminate the existence of the Whig Ministry, and men would succeed with whom, after what had passed in the House of Commons, Lord St. Vincent would not tolerate any official connexion whatever; he therefore at once transmitted his intention to retire, and so well nigh was he to carrying it into effect; that, when the news of Mr. Fox's death did arrive, nothing but assurance from Lord Howick that Lord St. Vincent's relinquishing his command would be "a national misfortune;" and that Lord Howick trusted that "nothing short of most weighty considerations, connected with character and honour, would induce him to leave a station where his services were indispensable," kept his flag flying, or preserved for him that exquisite pleasure of which his Lordship, in common with every one, enjoyed the more, in proportion as he had longer and more intimate official intercourse with Lord Howick's successor at the Admiralty, Mr. Thomas Grenville.

When Lord St. Vincent first accepted the second command on this station, it was with the assurance that when the winter had set in, and the season of rigorous blockade was over, he should be permitted to reside on shore, near the port of refit. Mr. Grenville ratified this promise; His Lordship retired to

Rame House, near Cawsand Bay; and, owing to political events it happened, that from that period, this Admiral never again returned to active service at sea. For a few winter months his flag did fly on board such of his ships as came in to refit, and well do their Officers remember how quickly he despatched them off again: but his Flag was now soon to be struck never again to be hoisted.

Early in the year 1807, George III. took advantage of even the milk-and-water measure for Catholic relief, which the Whigs introduced, to get rid of a Ministry, many of whom he personally disliked, the political principles of all of whom he detested. England disgraced Herself by a then stupid, senseless cry of "Church in danger,"—and by long years of suffering under Tory misrule, was justly to atone for Her religious intolerance.

On the change of Administration, Lord St. Vincent immediately resigned his command. It also belongs to memoirs of his life to add, with what dignity and grace Mr. Grenville on the same occasion retired from the Admiralty.

As soon as the fate of the Cabinet was decided, Mr. Grenville sent for the Author's father, and said, "Mr. Tucker, we are all going out." After a short silence of surprise, "Very well, Sir," replied the Secretary, "I'll fetch your book in a moment."—"For what?" inquired the Minister. "That you may select those whom you may wish to promote before you go."—"Mr. Tucker," said Mr. Grenville, "I 'll not make one promotion in any line; no, not for my brother; send for a blank commission for a

Commander-in-chief," — which Mr. Grenville then signed in blank, and directed to be transmitted to Lord St. Vincent, to be by him filled up, with whatever name he pleased,—"which," Mr. Grenville added, "was due to him from the situation he held in the fleet, and that the Country owed to him." Mr. Tucker endeavoured to argue the point by stating, "how many of Mr. Grenville's friends had been relying upon him for promotion, how many years they had waited for the opportunity, and how many might elapse before he had again the power." Mr. Grenville replied: "Had I remained in office, I should gladly have promoted them as the service would permit; but I have no idea of saddling the Country with 200 or 300 pensioners, for it would be little else, because, forsooth, I am removed from the Admiralty. No, no, Mr. Tucker, that shall never be said of me." An example which it had been well for an impoverished Country, if succeeding Statesmen had followed; but which is nothing more than consistent with Lord St. Vincent's sketch of him who exhibited it: "He was," said his Lordship, "the truest patriot, the most upright man, the most faithful straight-forward servant of the public that I ever met with in any situation." *

* He is also the most amiable, most delightful person; and reliance upon his politeness emboldens the mention of another incident, to prove how accurately Lord St. Vincent discerned character.

A vacancy happening for a Commissioner at one of the foreign yards before he went into the Board Room at the Admiralty, Mr. Grenville asked Mr. Tucker, "who would be the fittest man

To one who so ardently admires the great Admiral who now retired into private life, nothing could be more easy or gratifying than to eulogize his naval career in panegyric, which would not be more glowing than just: to recapitulate, his inexhaustible expedients to overcome difficulties,—the reformation, the instruction, the rapid advance of his school,—the spirit which he infused of enterprise,—the omnipresence which he enforced of obedience,—the perfect discipline of his energetic command,—the distinguished Officers whom he educated,—the boldness with which he attacked and defeated an enemy's fleet, nearly doubling his own in numbers,—the grandeur of his conduct in the Mutiny,—the wonderful skill with which he drew forth the powers and resources of all ranks of subordinates, and then

in the service to fill that situation with most benefit to the public? Mr. Tucker directly replied, that it would be a good opportunity for him to show his regard for a Captain, naming him, for whom Mr. Grenville had private reasons of friendship; and, that the Captain was a perfectly eligible candidate for the situation. "Mr. Tucker," replied Mr. Grenville, "I did not ask you, Sir, how to show kindness to my personal friends, whom I shall always be glad to serve, when I can, without detriment to the Service; but, who is the fittest man to do the work of the public? do you think that Captain is?"—"No, Sir, I do not."—"Then who is, in your opinion, the best fitted for the situation?" Mr. Tucker mentioned two or three, whose names Mr. Grenville took into the Board Room,—but even that would not do. An Officer was suggested there, with the concurrence of the sea Lords, whom they thought best qualified, and that Officer accordingly was appointed, without having even applied for the situation. Such are the First Lords of the Admiralty which this Country wants.

combined them to work together for the Country, —his fearless opposition to injurious prejudices and usages, of however long standing, however high abode,—and, what crowns his course, the ulterior and lasting excellences which have emanated from his system;—on all this it would be delightful to indulge. But then would follow the annihilating question, what is, on such a subject, the value of a civilian's opinion? Instead therefore of risking an encounter with that criticism, a single retrospective glance by Lord St. Vincent himself on the service from which he had now retired is offered.

Almost immediately after the Flag was struck for the last time, the King commanded the presence of his great Admiral at a private audience. After homage had been paid to Majesty, George III. expressed deep regrets that His Officer would not continue in command of His Channel Fleet; to which Lord St. Vincent replied, "Sire, my life ever has been, and ever will be, at your Majesty's disposal, but I am the guardian of my own honour, and I could not place it in the hands of your Majesty's present Ministers." The King at first appeared rather displeased; but then in the most gracious manner said, "Well, Lord St. Vincent, you have now quitted active service, as you say, for ever,—tell me, do you think the Naval service is better or worse than when you first entered it?"

Lord St. Vincent: "Very much worse, may it please your Majesty."

The King, very quickly: "How so? how so?"

Lord St. Vincent: "Sire, I have always thought

that a sprinkling of nobility was very desirable in the Navy, as it gives some sort of consequence to the service; but at present the Navy is so overrun by the younger branches of nobility, and the sons of Members of Parliament, and they so swallow up all the patronage, and so choke the channel to promotion, that the son of an old Officer, however meritorious *both* their services may have been, has little or no chance of getting on."

The King: "Pray who was serving Captain of the Fleet under your Lordship?"

Lord St. Vincent: "Rear Admiral Osborne, Sire, the son of an old Officer."

The King: "Osborne, Osborne! I think there are more than one of that name Admirals."

Lord St. Vincent: "Yes, Sire, there are three brothers, all Admirals."

The King: "That's pretty well for democracy, I think."

Lord St. Vincent: "Sire,—the father of those Officers served twenty years as First-lieutenant, with my dear friend Admiral Barrington, who had never sufficient interest to get him beyond the rank of Commander. He was of necessity obliged to send all his sons to sea, and to my own knowledge, they never had anything more than their pay to live on; nevertheless, they always appeared as gentlemen; they were self-educated, and they got on in the Service upon the strength of their own merits alone; and, Sire, I hope your Majesty will pardon me for saying, I would rather promote the son of an old deserving Officer than of any noble in the land."

The King mused for a minute or two, and then said, "I think you 're right, Lord St. Vincent, quite right."

Lord St. Vincent then gave to his King a particular account of the efficiency and discipline in which he had left his fleet, into all of which the King entered with great interest, and with the whole description of which His Majesty expressed the very high satisfaction, and approbation, which he must have enjoyed. "His Majesty," repeated Lord St. Vincent, "behaved in the most gracious and kind manner possible."

And now let our Sailors say; than in such fearless counsel to his King,—whose foible it was to court the aristocracy,—was it possible for an old Officer to more gracefully retire? or departing, could he bequeath, a more precious legacy to "the Service," which he always used to say, "was nearest his heart?"

TO THE HON. ADMIRAL CORNWALLIS.

Mortimer Street, 5th February, 1806.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

Some months ago, after Mr. Pitt came into office the last time, a request was made to me by his Cabinet, through Lord Sidmouth, to take the command of the Fleet, which I spurned at unless Mr. Pitt unsaid all he had said in the House of Commons against me; and, lest any unfavourable impression should have been made upon the mind of the King, on this refusal, I asked an audience at Windsor, and humbly submitted, that though my life was at

he disposal of His Majesty, and of my Country, I was the uardian of my own honour, and could not trust it in the ands of Mr. Pitt, after the treatment I had received from im. I am now called upon to serve; and in the state the mpire is reduced to, I feel it an imperious duty to obey ıe call, with only one repugnance, which arises out of the igh respect and esteem I have for you; and I beg you will ɜst assured that every possible delicacy and attention will e paid to your zeal and services, for no man regards you ıore sincerely than

Your very faithful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN

Mortimer Street, 26th February, 1806.

IR,

On my return to town last evening, I received your cknowledgment of the order I gave to put yourself under ny command, and a representation of the inadequacy of he complement of His Majesty's ship under your command, and requesting that I would lay it before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. In reply, I have to observe, that as neither you nor I have the experience which ould justify such a representation, neither of us having een at sea in the ship (nor would the opinion of Captain Fleming bear us out, for the same reason,) we should expose ourselves to the just reprehension of that Board, for presuming to combat the judgment of the Navy Board, whence comes the proposition for the establishment of a ıew ship,) without the knowledge which could alone support us in an appeal to the Admiralty, always to be done with the utmost degree of respect, delicacy, and caution, and never without the best possible ground to stand upon.

I am, Sir, your very obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL SIR T. TROUBRIDGE.

Mortimer Street, 3rd March, 1806.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

Many thanks for your letter from Madras. I had before received a very insane one from , who is either deep in the mire or stark staring mad. Your calm dignified statement to the Admiralty has attracted the admiration of all I have conversed with. I confess that under such very trying circumstances, my temper would not have borne me out as yours has done. I must refer you to Tucker and other correspondents for the news of the day; for I am so much occupied in preparing to hoist the Union, that I have scarce time to assure you how truly I am

Your very affectionate, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Hibernia, off Ushant, 27th March, 1806.

DEAR TUCKER,

If Talleyrand's letter to Mr. Fox implies a wish to open a negotiation, we cannot be too prompt in proceeding upon the best means of restoring and adding to our Navy. How the unaccountably lost spirit of discipline and animation of it is to be recovered, I cannot tell, but I really think, that starvation (*entre nous*) is the only mode. Sure I am that an over increase of full and half-pay will dish it up completely.

The converting Plymouth Sound into a Mole is essential to the opposing a powerful fleet in Brest. This vast overflow of young nobility in the Service makes rapid strides to the decay of seamanship, as well as subordination, and I wish with all my heart we had no Captains with seats in Parliament. Torbay is become a bugbear, and Falmouth

harbour preferred, because of its repose and difficulty of getting out of it; our wives have found their way to Plushing, and fly on board the ships of their husbands the moment they appear, and inhabit the cabins, and even contrive to get into quarantine, to go a cruize; in short, I can perceive no principle of laudable ambition or patriotic spirit anywhere. Prize-money, or looking forward to retirement, with a good provision of some sort from the country, appear to be the governing action of all the Officers' minds I have yet seen. We go on quietly but steadily here, setting those right who are wrong, by signal, thereby shutting out discussions; and I think our conduct has already made some impression.

Scarcely any of the wholesome regulations I established for the better government and economy of the fleet is to be found in the Order Book of . I am always Yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK,

First Lord of the Admiralty.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 8th April, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

You will be informed, before this arrives at the Admiralty, of the measures I have taken touching the squadron under the orders of Rear-Admiral Sir Richard Strachan, which I hope will be approved, because it gives the most probable chance of intercepting Guillemont's squadron and the Marengo; as the three divisions under Stirling, Harvey, and Strachan, will nearly spread over such parts of the Bay of Biscay (with an attention to Vigo and Ferrol) as the enemy is most likely to steer for, if bound to Rochefort, L'Orient, or Brest.

There were certainly three or four-and-twenty ships in Brest, a few of them very old, which I am apt to believe

have been undergoing some sort of repair in the Arsenal; and I consider the two lately brought down, and far advanced in their rigging, as a proof of it. They have at all periods sent ships to sea that our Officers would not serve in; I therefore keep as sharp a look-out as if I were certain of their intention to push out.

The wind is now so far to the southward, they cannot budge. The Impétueux continues at anchor off the Black Rocks, and the Diamond and l'Aigle off the Parquette, and I have been close in with Ushant every day.

I most heartily congratulate your Lordship on your excellent father's advancement in the Peerage, and I hope soon to hear that you are called up by writ; for sure I am, the business of the Admiralty will not admit of your attendance in the House of Commons.

Ever, my dear Lord, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

Near Ushant, April 8th, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

Lieut. Faden, of the Royal Marines, now serving in the Hibernia, had much injustice done him, when I was at the head of the Board of Admiralty, owing to a gross misrepresentation from the Island of Alderney, which I was never informed of until he was placed near me in Essex, with a recruiting party of the Chatham division. The poor man lost four years and a half rank by this circumstance; and being a very meritorious Officer, and well acquainted with the bayonet exercise, in which the flank companies in the French army so much excel all other troops, I, at his request, got him embarked on board this ship, and he has brought the Marines forward in the use of that powerful weapon in a very extraordinary manner. His uncle, Major Gaum, now resident at Pimlico, has written a

reatise upon the subject, and I hope is known to Mr. Vyndham and Gen. Fitzpatrick; considering, as I do, iat expertness in this exercise may some day or other ecide the fate of the Country, I beg leave to recommend iis Officer as a candidate for an adjutancy in the Royal Iarines. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL MARKHAM.

Hibernia, under Ushant, 15th April, 1806.

Y DEAR ADMIRAL,

I rejoice to learn that you are going to Parliament for ower to make Plymouth Sound a secure place of anhorage for our Fleets in all weathers; for on that, and the arrying my great plan of an arsenal between Pitcher's ard and Greenhithe into execution, depends the preservaon of our Country from the all-powerful Empire across he water.

Those poor young men for whom Captain Gosselin has pplied, should not long be left exposed to the ill-humour f Captain , who will appear in an odd shape, hen our correspondence, upon the subject of twenty men eing stated in his weekly account absent without leave, omes before the Board. The real fact is, he was not resent at the payment of the , nor did he go n board after it until he was directed to put to sea, and oin this squadron. In the interval these men contrived to et on shore. We accompanied him within the Black Rocks this morning, and placed the under the ommand of Captain Lawford.

The ways of the two last Boards pass all understanding; nd it is said that did not believe that the two rench squadrons had slipped out of Brest for a great ength of time after they were gone. He is a very singular haracter. Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Hibernia, close to Ushant, 17th April, 1806.

DEAR TUCKER,

We are extremely in want of my Letter and Order Books during the time I commanded the Channel Fleet, in 1800, and I beg you will send them out as expeditiously as possible.

We have performed a good day's work in completing the provisions, of all species, (of the Prince George and Formidable, out of the San Josef, and filling up the water of this ship, eighty tons, out of that ship,) between half after eight in the morning and four o'clock in the evening. The weather was most propitious, water smooth; and by furling all the sails, the ships drifted alike, and I do not believe the most trifling accident has happened, not even the jamming of a finger. Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

A great many other useful works went on during the operation I have related, such as shifting sails, setting up rigging, scraping and greasing top-masts and top-gallant-masts, and repairing sails; twenty sail-makers were employed in the Hibernia, caulking, &c.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 23rd April, 1806.

DEAR TUCKER,

The only distress I feel on the failure of is on account of the embarrassment it occasions to Lord Howick. That he, , is best qualified of any man in the Navy for the office, with the exception of his want of that strength of mind essential to the discharge of the duties of it, I have yet no doubt. In a long intercourse with the Service, I have scarcely found one man of exten-

ive information who did not shake under the responsibility f the profession, how then can I venture to name another) Lord Howick, for whose success I am as much interested as any man existing. His Lordship is perfectly right ɔt to pledge himself to any system: the influence of Mr. itt, and the activity of his creatures, have fixed such a oted prejudice against mine amongst men of all parties id descriptions, that it would be very unwise in him, hatever his future intentions may be, hastily to enter into y views, although I still consider them as the only means preserving the Country from the yoke of France. I ɔpe he will be induced to increase the number of shipights and caulkers, by giving apprentices to every good tificer in the Dock-Yards: this, with the influx from the [erchant-builders' Yard, whenever we have a peace, with ı entire new Navy Board, and a great arsenal in prepaıtion to employ them in, may enable us to keep peace ith France. Venice, with the forests of fine oak timɜr in the adjacent provinces, is a resource to that allɔwerful Country we never before had to calculate upon, nd, I do assure you, it costs me many a sleepless night.

Pray do not object to Mr. Jeffrey bringing forward his ıotion; whether the papers, so long moved for, are prouced, or not: my character suffers more by the advantage e takes of delay, than it can do by his inveterate abuse.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

Hibernia, 24th April, 1806.

IY DEAR LORD,

How unfortunate it is that the fine gallant fellow, hose letters I enclose, sinks under responsibility; which, ı truth, I have found to be the case with almost every aluable Officer in the navy: Boscawen was an exception

to it. Permit me to suggest to your Lordship, that orders from the Admiralty for Sir Richard Strachan to replenish with the utmost despatch, and join me upon this rendezvous, with a view of relieving , should be lodged at Plymouth; for if he continues in this languid state it will be all over with him.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO COMMISSIONER TOWRY.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 29th April, 1806.

MY DEAR SIR,

Johnny will not like corned beef, I fear, after being so long gorged with the fresh, which, I am confident, generated the dreadful infectious ulcers which have deprived so many men of their limbs and lives, the allowance being too large for the moderate labour and exercise they undergo. My opinion has long been, that the supplies of fresh beef have been too frequent; but a discontinuance under me would produce a clamour amongst the Officers, from whence all our evils have originated, and you well know how soon seditious expressions are conveyed from the Ward-room to the Gun-deck; I therefore would not advise your going very deep into this measure of experiment, until we see how it is relished by the people. It is much to be apprehended the Officers will condemn it *in toto*, as their tables are furnished from the live cattle sent out. A revival of economy, discipline, and order, is difficult enough, and any act which might create murmur would be equally hazardous and unwise. The approaching warm season, too, is much against your operation, which has the best wishes of your very sincere and obedient servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 2nd May, 1806.

DEAR TUCKER,

This great influx of nobility into the Navy has contributed largely to making the office of Captain a complete sinecure; and it only wanted Lord Garlies' proposition, to give additional pay to the First-lieutenants, to put the finishing stroke to it. As the Service now stands, all the powers, even punishments, are delegated to the First-lieutenant: the Captain does not turn out as formerly; seldom comes upon deck; and takes everything upon report. The change since I commanded the fleet six years ago is really quite alarming, for the Captain now does not think himself responsible for anything; while I maintain, (and ever will,) that he is responsible for the conduct of every Officer and man in the ship he commands.

Ever yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO VICE-ADMIRAL SIR J. T. DUCKWORTH, K.B.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 9th May, 1806.

DEAR DUCKWORTH,

You have acted like yourself throughout your late dash, and triumphed over the Saints, who certainly did show you every indignity in their power.

I understand from the friends of Lord Collingwood that he wishes to come to England, to recruit his health and spirits after the anxiety and fatigue he has undergone since the battle of Trafalgar. Under these circumstances I cannot permit that your engagement to me should stand in the way of your succeeding to that desirable command, especially as old Bowen is a good *locum tenens*, and I am getting this fleet into order, regularity, and discipline.

Sir J. Warren has snapped up the Marengo and Belle Poule, the latter captured by your *élève*, William Parker, after a well-contested action, in which the Belle Poule is said to have lost her first and second Captains, with a great carnage of inferior Officers and men: the Amazon had her First-lieutenant and several men killed. My nephew only wanted this to completely establish his reputation. Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL MARKHAM.

Near Ushant, 17th May, 1806.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

In my last letter to Tucker I mooted my going into port when the Hibernia should come in course of payment, and I proposed running up to Spithead in a frigate. Upon reflection, I think it will be better to proceed thither in the Hibernia at once, as by that means I may get back to her by the time she is filled up and paid. Although the example I set six years ago in the best mode of cruizing upon Brest has not been followed by any of my successors, and the in-shore squadron has most shamefully abandoned the station assigned to it, as I will explain when we meet, I think the system is now established on such principles as cannot be departed from; the more especially as Sir Charles Cotton has been witness to the certainty of keeping hold of Ushant in any wind or weather, by taking shelter under that island in an easterly gale, and profiting by the tides (which are as advantageous as about Scilly) in other circumstances. The squadron before Rochefort may be supplied with water and provisions from Plymouth until the approach of the autumnal equinox. The two convoys which have been recently sent will make them hold out the month of July, before which time it will be no longer necessary to continue the squadron off Cape Finisterre.

n my judgment the squadron before Rochefort should be rengthened, for it is possible that ships may get into the 'ertuis d'Antioche, *malgré* the efforts of our squadron, and ıe tables be turned upon it. These are the reveries of

Your steady friend, ST. VINCENT.

TO VICE-ADMIRAL SIR JOHN WARREN.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 21st May, 1806.

[Y DEAR CHEVALIER,

The favourable opinion you express of the good conuct of my nephew, William Parker, affords me inexpresble satisfaction; and it is no less fortunate than true, that e has merited the esteem and regard of every Officer he as served under, many of them of eminence in the profeson, from his first entrance into it.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL MARKHAM.

Hibernia, under Ushant, 22nd May, 1806.

Y DEAR ADMIRAL,

The Captain of the might have been a good mmander of a Guinea-ship, although he is neither sean nor soldier. He told Bowen that he was sounding th his master the day before yesterday, on the very rocks ı ran upon. I hope you will turn his ship's company over the Lavinia, and when the is repaired and anned, send her to the coast of Guinea; for he is fit for thing else. Not that I think free from blame; r making the signal to reconnoitre Brest in such hazy ather, that the Long Marks could not be seen. This ose from a gossip between him and Captain ho stayed nearly three hours with him, when he ought to ıve returned to me immediatel his launch and two

rowing boats having been left here, to assist in getting one hundred tons of water out of the Ville de Paris, which we achieved in four hours, to a minute. I was much at a loss to account for the Ville de Paris having carried away her foreyard, and we learned from the Lieutenant yesterday that it was actually done by keeping the lee fore-brace fast in tacking, and which broke short by the force of the men on the weather-brace. She is now shifting a fore-topmast, and how the one she is lowering has been sprung is unaccountable, for we have had very moderate weather and smooth water ever since she joined. The Egyptienne carried out four topmasts to Admiral Harvey's squadron the other day, and if we continue to throw away topmasts at this rate, the forests of the north will not furnish an adequate supply. There is great lack of seamanship in the service, and the young people now coming up are for the most part frippery and gimcrack. I wish we could revive the old school. Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS. RICKETTS.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 23rd May, 1806.

MANY thanks to you, my dear Sister, for the interest you have taken in the division of the House of Commons, which took place on the day I retired from the Admiralty, two years before; I had been led to expect that it was the determination of Ministers, as soon as the motion of Mr. Jeffrey was disposed of, and the vote of thanks passed, to move for a Committee to inquire into the conduct of the Navy Board, founded upon the Report of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, and the papers moved for by Admiral Markham; but people in office do not much like investigations of this kind. As far as this goes, I am a little disappointed, because such a committee would have

done ample justice to me, and to that infamous Board, which must be swept away, and a new one formed.

Baird, with his usual zeal, has embarked in the Kent, the crew of which is visited with a malignant infectious fever.

Your truly affectionate ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 2nd June, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

Not having Mr. Clark's treatise on naval tactics with me, I am unable to give you a detailed opinion upon the influence it has had in the several victories our fleets have obtained over those of France, Spain, and Holland, since its publication. I would not for the world subtract from the merits of Mr. Clark, which I have always admitted; yet, on referring to the encyclopedia, wherein are copious extracts from the pamphlet, I perceive evident signs of compilation from Père le Hoste, down to Viscount de Grenier. In truth, it would be difficult for the ablest seaman and tactician to write upon the subject without running into one or all the French authors.

Inclosed your Lordship will receive the best judgment I can form on the claim Mr. Clark has of any merit in the battles of the 1st June, and the attempts on the preceding days by Lord Howe, the battles of Camperdown and Trafalgar: that fought off *Cape St. Vincent is totally out of the question.*

I do not see, however, that Ministers can withhold some reward to Mr. Clark, after what has been lavished by former Administrations.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT ON "CLARK'S NAVAL TACTICS."

LORD RODNEY passed through the enemy's line by accident, not design, although historians have given him credit for the latter; this action is, however, not in question, the book having been first published in 1790.

Lord Howe's attacks upon the fleet of the enemy were at variance with the tactics of Mr. Clark: on the 28th of May signals were made for a general chase to windward, and to harass the enemy's rear as the ships came up, which was not effected till the close of day, when the French suffered a three-decker to be cut off, at the risk of being taken possession of, in order to avoid a general action.

On the 29th May a manœuvre, by which Lord Howe proposed to cut off the rear of the enemy, by passing through his line, failed in its effect, owing to the mistake or disobedience of signals; and the only advantage gained was the weather-gage, which he preserved to the first of June, when he run down in a line abreast, nearly at right-angles with the enemy's line, until he brought every ship of his fleet on a diagonal point of bearing to its opponent, then steering on an angle to preserve that bearing until he arrived on the weather-quarter, and close to the centre ship of the enemy, when the Queen Charlotte altered her course, and steered at right-angles through the enemy's line, raking their ships on both sides as she crossed, and then luffing up and engaging to leeward.

Lord Duncan's action was fought pell-mell (without plan or system); he was a gallant Officer (but had no idea of tactics, and being soon puzzled with them;) and attacked, without attention to form or order, trusting that the brave example he set would achieve his object, which it did completely.

The attack at Aboukir furnishes no observation for or

against the tactics of Mr. Clark, but his position "that a fleet to windward bearing down at right-angles upon the fleet of the enemy must be crippled, if not totally disabled before it can reach the enemy," has been disproved by the more recent action under Lord Nelson, bearing down in two columns at Trafalgar.

Mr. Clark is most correct in his statement of the advantages to be derived from being to leeward of the fleet of the enemy. His mode of attack in columns when to windward has its merit, as have also his statements of the advantages and disadvantages of shifts of wind.

Upon the whole, his tactics are certainly ingenious, and worthy the study of all young and inexperienced Officers. But the great talent is to take prompt advantage of disorder in the fleet of the enemy, by shifts of wind, accidents, and their deficiency in practical seamanship, to the superior knowledge of which much of our success is to be attributed, and I trust it will never be sacrificed to frippery and gimcrack. ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL STIRLING.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 2nd June, 1806.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

I will thank you to state to the Captains of the ships you sent into Cawsand Bay to replenish and get paid, that I have informed my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of the time prescribed to carry these measures into execution during the summer season; six clear days exclusively of the day of arrival and that of sailing, which is considered ample for these purposes; and that a longer continuance in port would be productive of disease; and you cannot be too precise in your orders to send the Pay Books by the mail coach the evening of their arrival; their Lordships having found it expedient to take seven sail-of-the-line from me, I

am put to my trumps to keep up the four squadrons, and nothing short of punctual obedience to the foregoing orders will enable me to perform what is required.

Yours sincerely, ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS. RICKETTS.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 9th June, 1806.

MY DEAR SISTER,

The executors of the late Lord Nelson will receive a good sum from the money granted by Parliament to the persons engaged in the Battle of Trafalgar. Give my love to Lady Nelson, and inform her Ladyship that the Solicitor-General is the ablest, and one of the honestest men that ever appeared at the Chancery Bar. I love Lady Nelson dearly, and admire her dignified pride and spirit. Any assistance I can give her she may command; I shall be in town the latter end of the month for six days, of which I will thank you to acquaint her Ladyship.

Your truly affectionate, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 9th June, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

When the Mast-house in Falmouth is run up, and fit to receive masts, it will be advisable to send a few lower masts and bowsprits, for ships of the line, thither; for Portsmouth and Plymouth are such vile haunts, there is no getting a ship out of either in any reasonable time, and every ship not in course of pay should be ordered to Falmouth.

There is a horrible scene of profligacy and debauchery on board the hulk of the . The presence of the Captain and all the Officers is much more necessary when a

ship docks than at any other period; and no leave of absence should be given, but, on the contrary, a strict injunction that the Captain and Officers are never off the spot.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. GEORGE GREY.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 9th July, 1806.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I hope you have not forgot to ask your brethren to promote your *élève*, Mr. Thomas Hill, one of the two smart brothers, sons of a worthy Gunner, who were messengers in the Ville de Paris. Captain J. E. Douglas, with whom he served as Master's-mate after he came from the East Indies, replied to my inquiries of his conduct, that he should be very glad to have him a Lieutenant in the Bellona. He passed his examination with great credit; and if you do not obtain that promotion for him, which I cannot, he will probably follow the example of his brother in seeking promotion from a foreign power. I must confess, it would give me abundant satisfaction to see a youth, who has raised himself thus far entirely by his merit, preferred to the idle, licentious aristocrats who are taking away all the first-fruits of the Service, to the utter exclusion of friendless merit. Your very affectionate

ST. VINCENT.

TO CAPTAIN KEATS.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 12th July, 1806.

SIR,

You much overrate the share I had in your being placed in the command of a respectable detached squadron, for I was principally influenced by public duty. I am now endeavouring to show the Admiralty the impropriety of

you and Captain Hood serving under such responsibility without broad pendants, and I shall derive great satisfaction from a favourable result.

Very sincerely yours, ST. VINCENT.

GENERAL MEMORANDUM.—TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS AND COMMANDERS.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 16th July, 1806.

IT is my direction, that during the time the ship you command remains in port, whether in Cawsand Bay, Plymouth Sound, or Hamoaze, you regularly, at the least once a week, visit her patients at the Hospital, accompanied by your Surgeon and Physician of the Fleet, when not employed upon other important duties; and you are to see every man whose case does not forbid his being disturbed, and to encourage and inspire them, by all the address and attention in your power; but care must be taken that the period of your visit be varied, and no previous notice given of your approach. You are also to provide that on the day immediately preceding the sailing of your ship, her surgeon visits all his patients, in order to bring away those who, although not so entirely cured as to be discharged into the Prince Frederick, may be, however, in such a state of convalescence as in the opinion of the medical Officers of the hospital, renders their complete re-establishment on board their own ship a matter of little doubt or delay.

ST. VINCENT.

FROM LORD HOWICK.

(Most secret and confidential.)

Admiralty, July 22nd, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

Despatches have been received to-day which give us the strongest reason to believe that the enemy meditate an

immediate attack upon Portugal, and that their preparations are already in a considerable state of forwardness, 30,000 men being assembled at Bayonne.

To defend Portugal at the present moment may perhaps be impossible, we must therefore look to the next best means of assisting our old Ally, and of rendering the conquest of that Country as little prejudicial to ourselves as possible. The first of these objects can, I fear, only be accomplished by bringing off the Court, and protecting them on their passage to the Brazils, a scheme which, I believe, was in contemplation at the end of the last, and the beginning of the present war: the second must induce us to use all possible means to secure their fleet. Both require great dexterity in the previous negotiation; and the service is of such paramount importance that it appears to me, as well as to the rest of the King's Ministers, that it cannot be safely entrusted in any hands but your Lordship's; you may therefore expect immediately some confidential person, fully possessed of all our views, and to be joined with you in the powers to negotiate, to proceed off Lisbon for this purpose. By him full explanations and instructions will be sent to your Lordship, but I thought it necessary to lose no time in communicating to you this intention, that you may make your arrangements for quitting your station off Brest, both for the purpose of maintaining the squadrons on their different stations, and for collecting the force which it may be necessary to take with you for this new service. Whatever ships can be spared from home shall be sent to you, as I am very anxious not to withdraw any of the squadrons now watching the enemy. While this service lasts your Lordship's command will necessarily be extended to Cape St. Vincent.

I am at present pressed for time, but was unwilling to lose to-night's post, in order that you may have the earliest notice of what is intended, and will write more particularly to-morrow. I am, my dear Lord,

Yours most sincerely, HOWICK.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 25th July, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

I send your Lordship enclosed a very interesting letter from Sir Thomas Troubridge, and in conversation with Captain Walker this morning I learned that

has been playing the whole game.

I shall never ask you to promote; but if several Lieutenants of the Hibernia are not raised to Commanders, the example set in her cannot be of long continuance. The Officers are always upon the full stretch; and it would have the appearance of puffing if I were to detail the change which has taken place here, and throughout the Fleet under my command, since I was last placed at the head of it. Ever yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

FROM LORD HOWICK.

Admiralty, July 28th, 1809.

MY DEAR LORD,

The time has been very pregnant with events since I last had the honour to write to your Lordship. Amongst the most important of these stands the separate peace, signed by Mr. D'Aubril on the part of Russia, under circumstances so extraordinary, that no person to whom they are not detailed can form any idea of them, and this detail I cannot at present commit to the uncertain conveyance of a letter.

We have also a variety of important intelligence, a part of which renders the important service which has been the subject of very late communications, less immediately pressing; it must not however be lost sight of, and a negotiation it is still intended should proceed to Lisbon, of whose proceedings your Lordship shall have due notice from me,

and full time to prepare for any measure which it may be necessary for you to undertake.

Under these circumstances, the extension of your command will be deferred for the present, and it has been necessary to detain Sir John Duckworth.

The ships which he was intended to take with him will therefore be applied to the service for which they were originally destined, in conveying the troops to the Mediterranean, to serve afterwards as a reinforcement to Lord Collingwood; whom, on account of the Russian defection, it becomes more necessary to strengthen. They will, however, be ordered to cruize for a short time off the Tagus, lest, by some additional ill-luck, Jerome Buonaparte should escape from Martinique, and endeavour to come that way. I am, my dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely, HOWICK.

I am sure you will read with pleasure the account of Lavie's handsome action with La Guerriere.

FROM LORD HOWICK.

(Secret and confidential.)

Admiralty, 30th July, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

The state of the negotiation at Paris, and the conduct of make it absolutely necessary to send some person to replace him, and we can find no person in all respects so well qualified for this mission as Lord Lauderdale. His former destination, therefore, is altered, and Lord Grenville has had some communication with Lord Rosslyn on the subject of Lisbon; a statement which he has made with respect to this service is herewith enclosed, and I should be much obliged to your Lordship to return it with such remarks as may suggest themselves, written on the margin. Till we are certain that Jerome has not

escaped from Martinique, I am very unwilling to make an opening of which he might avail himself, by withdrawing or too much weakening any of the squadrons. I am afraid the ships your Lordship mentions could not be collected without incurring one of these risks, as I do not see the means at present of replacing them from home. The accounts brought by the Excellent put us a good deal at our ease about Sicily; and if our means of defending that island had been properly applied, there could have arisen no apprehensions. But the dispatches received to-day from Paris state that an official account of the surrender of Gaeta had arrived there; an event certainly not to have been looked for within two days after the receipt of Sir Sidney's letter; and they add, that an unofficial account had also been received, stating that our troops had landed at St. Euphania, on the coast of Calabria, had defeated General Regnier's corps at Reggio, and taken General Compon and some hundred prisoners; but that having advanced further into the country, they had been met at Casouza by the body of the French army, under General Verdrier, and compelled to retreat, with considerable loss, and that it was even doubtful whether they would be able to effect their re-embarkation. This makes it necessary to lose no time in sending the ships and men that were destined for the Mediterranean, and precludes me from giving you a temporary supply from the former, which I had before intended. The French threaten very loudly about Portugal, and even fix a day for the march of their army; but I confess I am not very much terrified by this threat. We must not, however, turn a deaf ear to it; and it would be an unwise confidence if we were to neglect the necessary preparations for the service, upon which I have written so much lately to your Lordship. Your Lordship will, on your part, I trust, keep the means of making the necessary arrangements for it in view, so that no time may be lost when it is determined to act. I shall wait most anxiously

r the opinions I before requested from your Lordship, id for your remarks on Lord Rosslyn's paper.

The Colossus, I hope, will be completed, and enabled to in you almost immediately; the Windsor Castle is still pt back by the want of men; with regard to the other tails of service, Markham and Tucker will do all that is cessary. I lament exceedingly the event of 's terprise in the Garonne; it surely is ill-judged to incur ch risks without very great and important objects; and have given him a little hint to this effect. I am, with eat regard, my dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely, HOWICK.

TO THE HON. ADMIRAL CORNWALLIS.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 2nd August, 1806.

Y DEAR ADMIRAL,

To copy the pathetic language of Lieutenant Hutchson, — "If it is permitted to bewail the fall of a gallant fficer fighting in the just cause of his country," I do most ncerely that of Mr. Manners, who was appointed to fill a cancy in the Revenge, and was slain in his barge in conying the Cæsar, corvette, at the entrance of the Gaonne; and it is a tribute of applause due to the French ation that he was buried with military honours. I have so endeavoured to promote several others whom you comitted to my protection. A list of them is enclosed, and will persevere to the end in doing justice to those who re still on hand, for I shall esteem myself remarkably appy in promoting the interests of all those who have erited your good opinion; being, with the truest regard nd esteem, Very faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

Sir T. Gore wrote the finest *éloge* on Mr. Manners I ver read: it was so admirable that I sent it to Lord Howick.—ST. V.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

H.M.S. Hibernia, in the Tagus, 24th August, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

For the melancholy picture of the Court I must refer you to Lord Strangford's despatches, the description is too bad for the pen of a seaman. Mr. d'Aranjo returned to Lisbon on the 18th, and the following morning we were admitted to *pratique;* and having had notice over-night, the squadron was unmoored, and ran up abreast of the palace as soon as the Officer of Health had done his business, and I landed while the ships were running up; and after paying my respects at Santa Martha, the residence of His Majesty's Minister, I waited upon Mr. d'Aranjo, who received me with cordiality, as far as the outward and visible sign went. He made an awkward apology for keeping us so long in quarantine, which I did not suffer to pass without a remark upon it, and expressed my surprise that my appearance should have created suspicion in the minds of the Portuguese Government (which had been artfully worked upon by the French party, and had sunk the Pope's 4 per-cent). I observed, that the selection of an Officer who had always been the fast friend and protector of Portugal, ought to have reconciled the Government and People to the sudden appearance of British squadrons. He interrupted me at this sentence, and observed that the Prince had said, upon his communicating our arrival, "Lord St. Vincent is my friend." Upon the whole, our conversation, as far as it went, was satisfactory, and would have been continued, but that the Spanish ambassador was announced, when I took my leave, and faced the Spaniard in my way through the room of audience, who did not seem to like me at all. On Wednesday I called upon the Viconte d'Anadia, Minister of the Marine, who has been

very friendly in the prompt supply of a maintop-mast for the Illustrious, and a maintopsail-yard for the Kent.

A complete change in the opinions of the people touching the object of my mission, is manifested by the kindness shewn to myself and every Officer in the squadron, by all ranks and orders, more particularly by the clergy, from the Pope's Nuncio downwards; and I have every reason to believe that the most unbounded confidence is placed in the rectitude of my intentions.

The army is very much diminished in numbers since I was last in Portugal: 13,000 ill-armed infantry is the utmost that can be counted upon, and the cavalry beggars all description, both as to horses and men. No , and all the wood-work of the interior of the barracks in and about Lisbon has been torn away and consumed in cooking the soldiers' dinners. One 74-gun-ship and a few frigates are cruizing in the Straits' mouth; and they are now making every effort to equip a 64 and a frigate, to go out after an Algerine of 20 guns, but I doubt whether they will be able to effect it.

Most truly yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. GEORGE GREY.

H.M.S. Hibernia, in the Tagus, 27th August, 1806.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

The only motives that would induce me to go a second time to the Admiralty are, the constructing those great works at Plymouth and Northfleet, and establishing upon a firm foundation a new order of working the men in the Dock-Yards. Rest assured of the most affectionate regard and esteem of Yours, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS, COMMANDERS, AND COMMANDING OFFICERS.—GENERAL ORDER.

Hibernia, in the Tagus, August 1806.

IT being of the utmost importance that the best possible understanding and harmony should be at all times preserved between the crews of His Majesty's ships and the subjects of his ancient and faithful ally, Her Majesty the Queen of Portugal, you are hereby required and directed to give the strictest orders to the Officers and boats' crews of the ship you command to treat the Portuguese in the most courteous and friendly manner, not to run athwart or on board their boats, either in passing to and from the shore, or in going into a landing-place. No boat (jolly-boats excepted) is to be sent on shore without a Lieutenant or a Midshipman in her, who has passed his examination or nearly served his time, and their promotion will depend on their punctual obedience to these orders. When a launch is sent on the old Lisbon side to water, or ashore anywhere for other purposes, a Lieutenant, Master's-mate, Corporal, and four Marines, are to be sent in her, and the Marines posted to preclude liquor being brought to the crews, and to prevent their straggling; in addition to which precaution, application will be made to the Police to take up all straggling seamen who are found out of view, or a very short distance from the boats; and the usual charge will be made against any man so taken up, whether he belongs to a British ship-of-war, transport, or merchant-ship of any description.

No boat is to go alongside a packet, either under sail or at her moorings, upon any account whatever. The packet-stairs are recommended as the cleanest and most convenient landing-place. No boat, upon any pretence, to wait above twenty minutes upon Officers who have fixed their time to have boats sent to bring them on board, nor is any

boat to remain on shore after sunset. The Lieutenants, Mates, and Midshipmen, are to keep a third watch, precisely the same as is practised at sea, and the Captain called upon every occasion which may require it. And it frequently happens that the Portuguese Brazilmen, which are very slack moored, sheer on board His Majesty's ships on a weather-tide; the strictest injunctions are to be given, should the like happen to any ships under my command, that no injury be done to such ships by wantonly cutting the rigging, or by any other means: and the better to ascertain the persons who commit disorders in boats, or when caused from them, the boats not distinguished by emblems are to have the names of their respective ships painted in legible characters on the fore-part of the backboard; and never to be sent from their ships without a pendant shown on a staff in the fore-sheets.

This order is to be read to the ship's company; and the Lieutenants, Officers of the Royal Marines, Masters'-mates, and Midshipmen, are severally to take copies of it, that ignorance of its provisions may in no instance be alleged as an excuse for its violation. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 18th Sept. 1806.

SIR,

I feel as I ought the attention you have shown me in directing a Lieutenant's commission to be made out for Mr. Jackson. Of Lieutenant Usher I knew nothing until I was appointed to the command of the Channel Fleet seven years ago, when I soon discovered a spirit of enterprise, accompanied with sound judgment and deliberate courage, which carried him well through every difficult exploit; and he has pursued that line of conduct ever since, and is considered by all the Officers he has served

under as a very able partisan, and admirably fitted for the service you have selected him for.

I agree with you entirely that the infernal invention of Mr. Fulton might be used by the French with much greater advantage against us than it could against them, for at this moment, three o'clock in the morning, I very much doubt whether there is an Officer upon deck in any of His Majesty's ships at Spithead, Cawsand Bay, in the Downs, Yarmouth Roads, or at the Nore; while a vigilance is observed on board the French ships at Rochford, L'Orient, and probably in Brest, (although we have not had the means of ascertaining it there,) which surpasses anything I ever heard of. I have the honour to be, with the truest esteem and regard, Sir, your very faithful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Hibernia, in the Tagus, 18th Sept. 1806.

DEAR TUCKER,

The King having expressed displeasure at the paragraphs in the newspapers which stated the object of my mission, it becomes absolutely necessary to probe Mr. Mottley to the quick, and I expect it from the justice of Lord Howick, as well as from the friendship which has always subsisted between us, and that his Lordship will lay the confession of Mr. Mottley before His Majesty.

I consider the approaching dissolution of Mr. Fox as a very great national calamity, and to me personally an irreparable loss. Should Lord Howick retire from the Admiralty, either from disgust, or to fill a higher department, I desire you will prepare his Lordship for my retreat from the command of the Fleet, for I will not submit to the quaint comments of a petulant and ignorant Admiralty.

I pity the exposure of the weakness of some of your Lords, whose dulness I have been long acquainted with; but I did not conceive it possible they could be so tho-

roughly unacquainted with the chart of the ocean to express such an opinion; for if ever a position was well-chosen for the interception of ships of the enemy coming across the Atlantic, bound either to Rochfort, L'Orient, or Brest, it is that on which Capt. Keats was placed. The four French frigates and Jerome Buonaparte are existing proofs.

We are upon the best terms, as, in truth, I am with all the Portuguese of every description, as well as with my countrymen. Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

Hibernia, in the Tagus, 21st Sept. 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

No step is taking by this Government to restore the finance or the army: indeed the latter cannot be improved until the former is put upon a good footing; and from every information I can obtain, no alteration in the Ministry can be effected without treating the Prince Regent in the manner that Lannes used to do; and even that would not do without ten or twelve thousand troops upon the banks of the Tagus. There is a rumour that those which were intended to come here are about to embark for their original destination. If you have in contemplation to prepare another body, pray let it come from Cork. The German corps, backed by two brigades of British and one thousand mounted cavalry, would do; and if they can be got ready to sail the first easterly wind in November, they will come here at a proper season. When Sir John Warren and Sir Richard Strachan arrive, do not let the ships strip, for they cannot need refreshment; but let them supply the place of sixty-fours off the Texel and in my squadron, and employ the sixty-fours in conveying troops hither.

Having been attacked by a diarrhœa, I was not able to go to Monsieur d'Aranjo's concert and supper on Thursday; but I learn that he paid much attention to Monsieur

d'Hermans, who is a cut-throat rogue, and was a traitor. Lords Rosslyn and Strangford are indefatigable. General Simcoe continues at Cintra, and is reported to be something better, but I fear his constitution is breaking up.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

Hibernia, 27th September, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

Although I was prepared for the death of Mr. Fox, the certainty of that mournful event having taken place has quite overset me. I feel it the more poignantly because of your probable removal from the Admiralty, a measure I foresaw, and in consequence I desired Mr. Tucker to prepare you for my retreat from the command of the Fleet, a station nothing upon earth but Mr. Fox and yourself could have induced me to reassume. I will, however, do nothing rashly, and I will take no step until after my arrival in Cawsand Bay; and I entreat you to leave orders, to be immediately despatched to the squadron off Ushant, for me to proceed thither the moment I join Sir Charles Cotton.

I most heartily wish it was in my power to bring about a coalition between Don Rodrigo de Souza and Monsieur d'Aranjo; but in the present state of the Court of Lisbon the thing is impossible. The Count de Villa Verde is in possession of every avenue to the palace; the prince is in a complete state of imbecility, and D'Aranjo and D'Anadia obliged to temporize. The latter has no desire to continue in office, having a taste for the polite arts, and preferring domestic life; while D'Aranjo has no existence but in office, and will act the Vicar of Bray to keep his place.

I have great doubts whether General Simcoe will live to reach England. He is so valuable a man that I could not do less than appoint a ship-of-the-line for his conveyance.

Ever yours, ST. VINCENT.

FROM LORD HOWICK.

(Private and confidential.)

Admiralty, 9th October, 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

Though an extraordinary pressure of business in leaving one office and going into another at a moment when no less than three negotiations were depending, might excuse some delay, yet I should not have deferred writing so long had I not thought that no time would be lost in the receipt of my letter by your Lordship during the interval in which you might be supposed to be on your passage from the Tagus, to resume your old station off Brest.

Your description of the state of Portugal is indeed deplorable. It is in vain to hope to defend any country totally incapable of exertion in its own defence; all that can be done in such a case is to endeavour to render the conquest as little prejudicial to ourselves as possible; and this, should the attempt hereafter be renewed by France, must be endeavoured. The intermediate time, however, should be employed in using all our influence to excite in the Prince Regent a proper feeling for his situation, and to effect such a change in the Administration as may gradually restore the country to a better state. I am afraid that the means which might have been employed for this end will be much diminished by your Lordship's departure. So large a force and so active an officer could not, however, be kept there for the sake of negotiation, and I am not without hopes that you may have left things in such a train as to produce, ultimately, the effect which we all so much desire. Upon the whole, I see no reason to withdraw my good opinion of Aranjo; and if there were some grounds, even strong grounds, for the dislike entertained of him by Almeida and Rodrigo de Souza, that dislike should give way when the general interest of the country is at stake.

Without a cordial union with Aranjo, it seems to me vain to hope that they can get rid of the pests who surround the Prince Regent; and the question comes simply to this: Whether they are content to see the Government going on in an inevitable course of ruin rather than sacrifice their old enmities? Almeida's offer to stand out of the way seems dictated by the purest motives, and by the most prudent view of the present state of Portugal. One must regret the loss of such a man, even for a moment, in the Government; but whilst Portugal is in a situation to fear, and France to threaten an attack, perhaps it may be advisable to accept the sacrifice which he so generously offers. With respect to the others, Don Rodrigo de Souza, Imea, and the other persons named to you by Almeida, I should hope the same motives would not operate to prevent their immediate admission into the Government; but, to get rid of two such wretches as Villa Verde and Vasconcallos, whoever may be their successors, would of itself be a good thing. Whatever may hereafter be made at the Board, there is but one wish as to your Lordship's continuance in the command of the Channel Fleet. Mr. Grenville I know has written to you strongly on this subject, and I can say, both for myself and my colleagues, that we should consider your abandoning your present command as a great national misfortune. I could not ask you to retain it under circumstances of insecurity, but I must express my most earnest hope that nothing short of the most weighty considerations, as connected with your own character and honour, will induce you to leave a station where your services at this moment are, in my opinion, indispensable. In me you may be always sure of a friend and a supporter; and I am persuaded that if I differ at all in this respect from my colleagues, it is only from older friendship and closer connection. You may be sure of finding in them all a favourable disposition, and fair and honourable conduct.

As connected with this subject, will you forgive me, my

dear Lord, if I press one point upon your consideration which my removal from the Admiralty enables me to do, with more freedom than I should have used if I had remained there. I know the miserable relaxation which you found, in taking the command of the Channel Fleet, in every part of the service, and how necessary vigorous measures were, to restore it to its former order and discipline. While the squadrons were to be kept up, it was also necessary that time should not be lost in port, by the ships coming in to refit; and the efficacy of your measures has been proved, by nothing having got into or out of the ports in France since you have been in command, without having been chased, and a part captured. But when one considers not only the severity of the duty of a blockade, but its discouraging tediousness, and the great length of time that many of the ships have been at sea, I wish you to reflect whether a little relaxation to the men, upon their coming into port, might now not only not be detrimental, but might be advantageous to the service. I am above all anxious that no particular cause of discontent should attach to your command; and whilst the crews of the Channel Fleet are not suffered to go over the side of the ship when in port, when others alongside of them have this indulgence, it is impossible that this should not in some degree be the case. Indeed, to speak quite plainly, I know that this has occasioned a good deal of murmuring, to which I should by no means counsel you to give way, if I did not think yielding a little (the act coming entirely from yourself and without the interference of any higher authority) might be good policy, both with respect to yourself and the service. A fair opportunity now offers, when the squadrons must be more united, and many of the ships come in to refit for the winter, for a milder order to be issued, which might be grounded on a fair consideration of the duty which has been performed, and the attention which is due to good order and obedience. I have written

this freely, feeling most anxious to remove even the slightest discontent which may affect you, and that it should be done in such a manner as to appear to proceed entirely from yourself; and with this view, as it enables me to give this advice (without any authority to enforce it) I cannot help considering my removal from the Admiralty as in some degree advantageous. If I have dwelt too long on the point, I trust you will attribute it to the earnestness which I must ever feel on any subject in which you are personally interested.

Believe me, my dear Lord, ever yours sincerely,

HOWICK.

TO WILLIAM JERVIS, ESQ.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 10th October, 1806.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

We were in perpetual masquerade the whole time of our stay in the Tagus, not less than a thousand Portuguese on board the Hibernia every day; some days three or four thousand, nobles, priests, merchants, shop-keepers, farmers with their wives and families, piscadors, &c. &c.; and, what is more extraordinary, many of the clergy, and some people of high rank, came to our war-ship, and were struck with the solemnity of it, for the Prebend of York is dignified, expressive, and solemn in his manner, with a fine voice, and excellent articulation. With these advantages, no wonder that he stole away the congregation from our ambassador's chapel, for Mr. Hill is a bad stick in the desk and pulpit, although a very learned and a very valuable man. When this was reported to the old Patriarch, (who is a great friend of mine, as is the Pope's Nuncio,) he laughed, and said, he must prohibit the ecclesiastics from our worships, as we should convert them to heresy. All the Ministers, both domestic and foreign, dined on board,

except the Spanish and French, who were afraid, but we were upon very good terms. The principal nobility, of all ages, and of both sexes, also dined on board, some of them more than once, and we had very pretty dances, — your friend, Captain Ricketts, having the best taste for turning a Quarter-deck into a ball-room I ever saw. The nuns of several convents, with their Lady-Abbesses, admitted me to conversations, one of them without the Grille; and very beautiful two or three of them were: they sent me cakes, sweetmeats, and toys, and seemed as if they wished to be amongst us. We certainly had their prayers, and, I have reason to believe, by the direction of the Patriarch, who considers me as the preserver of Portugal from French and Spanish bondage. The Nuncio dined with me twice, and the Patriarch sent me a message that he would have come had his health permitted. I had a good house in a delightful situation, but I gave my entertainments in the Hibernia: I also engaged a box at the Opera, which franked the Captains and other principal Officers, for I seldom went myself, and when I did, generally sat in the boxes of the Portuguese nobility. But these were necessary, although expensive appendages, to an embassy extraordinary. I have every reason to believe that we had the blessings of the whole country, from the Prince Regent to the meanest peasant, on our leaving the Tagus. The Captains of the squadron were the most correct and best-mannered men I ever served with; and not one indiscreet act, much less a violent one, was committed during the whole time. Your old acquaintance, Captain Malcolm, was one of them, and I never had so good an opinion of my own judgment as in their proof of the good selection I made. Give my kind love to the Doves, and be assured I always am your truly affectionate brother, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS.—GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 11th October, 1806.

It having appeared upon an inspection of the condemned main-topmast of the Illustrious that it is an uncommonly fine stick, full of turpentine, in the highest degree of preservation, and that it has been crippled by unskilfully and unmercifully setting up the rigging, which has been the occasion of the loss of so many top-masts, the Commander-in-chief therefore directs that the Masters and Boatswains of His Majesty's ships under his command have in future the full and entire direction of staying the masts or topmasts which shall be upset in the manner the topmast in question is; and the carpenters who held the survey are blameable for not stating in their report the cause of the spring; and they, with all the carpenters in the fleet, are strictly enjoined to account, to the best of their judgment, for all defects in the masts, yards, and hulls, of His Majesty's ships under my command, in every report of survey they shall hereafter make. St. Vincent.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 14th October, 1806.

SIR,

On falling in with the Santa Marguerita last evening, I was honoured with your letter of the 3rd instant. I return you many thanks for the obliging expressions in regard to me contained therein, and I beg leave to assure you, that I have long held your public and private character in the highest estimation; and that, next to the anxious desire of serving my Country, which has ever governed my conduct, the support of the present Administration was the

motive that induced me, at an advanced period of my life, to venture again on this fickle element, — which Lord Howick will bear testimony to; and that a condition was annexed, that I should not be required to keep the sea between the autumnal and vernal equinox. I have, in consequence, hired a house at Rame, very near Cawsand, for the express purpose of conducting the business of the fleet, without interfering with Admiral Young in the duties of the port of Plymouth; and I am somewhat surprised not to find authority to proceed to Cawsand Bay in the Hibernia, on my junction with Sir Charles Cotton; for I have suffered so much during several winters successively, that I cannot possibly stand the fag of this station; and whether I shall be able to endure the humid air of the west is very doubtful. In any event, you may rely on my giving every possible support to the Government, and assistance to you in the very arduous post wherein His Majesty has been pleased to place you, and I will never intentionally mislead you in opinions of men and things.

Permit me to recommend to your protection the Captains and Lieutenants who have been selected to serve with me for their merits; and Mr. Fairfax, the Master, by far the ablest seaman and navigator I have ever met with in that character, and a perfect gentleman, who, I hope, will fill the first vacancy of a Master-attendant in a Dock-yard at home. The fatigues of a very blowing night, with the business necessarily devolving on me this day, have brought on a most overpowering headache, which, added to the writing I have been obliged to go through, will, I trust, be accepted as an apology for employing my nephew as an amanuensis. I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO VISCOUNT HOWICK.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 18th Oct. 1806.

MY DEAR LORD,

Lord Rosslyn will have given you the detail of all our proceedings in Portugal, and as I agree with him *in toto*, it is unnecessary to plague you with anything more touching that devoted country. We had the good fortune to be well with all the Portuguese people, from the first nobility down to the piscadore; and no squadron ever departed from the Tagus in more perfect harmony with the country.

The new arrangements, as far as I can judge, are calculated to keep you together upon the principles with which you came into office, and no efforts shall be wanting on my part to uphold you. Should Markham and Tucker be removed from the Admiralty, and persons brought there of whom I have a mean opinion, — and, I am sorry to say, there are few flags at the main or the fore I have any respect for, — I do not see how it is possible for me to hold on in the command of this fleet, for the most trifling slip of my pen might be the subject of quaint comment, and compel me to retire in ill-humour.

But, as I observed to your Lordship in my last letter from the Tagus, I will do nothing rashly. I have every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of Mr. Grenville, which has been most obliging.

You will see, by the enclosed, that I had relaxed in the port orders before your Lordship's letter of the 9th reached me; to that order you are indebted to me for the maintenance of the detached squadrons during the last six months,—the restoration of the discipline of the fleet,—freedom from disease and desertion; and I pride myself more upon this than upon any exertion of my life. If you will, my good Lord, bring a bill into Parliament to disqualify any Officer under the rank of Rear-Admiral to sit in the House of Commons, the Navy may be preserved; but while a little, drunken,

worthless jackanapes is permitted to hold the seditious language he has done, in the presence of Flag-officers of rank, you will require a man of greater health and vigour than I possess to command your fleets.

Ever, my dear Lord, yours, &c. ST. VINCENT.

(ENCLOSURE.)—TO CAPTAIN KEATS, SUPERB.

Hibernia, off Ushant, 15th October, 1806.

SIR,

The period for rapid equipment being over, you are, in the directions given to ships going in for the purpose of being replenished or paid, no longer to insert that part of my instructions which would prohibit all Officers and men, except those actually employed in her equipment, from leaving the ship's sides during the period of her stay in port. I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL MARKHAM.

H.M.S. Hibernia, near Ushant, 21st Oct. 1806.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

The enclosed letter from Keats confirms me in the opinion I had formed, that Prince Jerome is indebted to the recall of that squadron for his escape. It is by far the best position that could be fixed upon; for a squadron of six sail-of-the-line, with a proper accompaniment of frigates, sloops, &c., will always spread the parallel of the Glenans and Belleisle, which is the line of march of all French ships of war from the other side the Atlantic; and I can hardly think it possible that any sea-officer of experience can differ in opinion from me on this subject; a cabinet composed of landsmen may.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Hibernia, Cawsand Bay, 22nd October, 1806.

SIR,

I am very much obliged by your prompt compliance with my request: one gale of wind would have done me up for the winter, probably rendered me *hors de combat.*

I cannot give credit to the City intelligence of three ships-of-the-line having got out of Brest, because the two last reconnoitres which were made by Captain Wolfe, a man who may be depended on, ascertains two first-rates and eight seventy-fours, including the Regulus. I never believed that the ten sail which appeared fit for sea in the outer road all the summer, were all of them capable of anything more than a run to Ireland or to Lisbon.

The Jemappe made demonstration with the other ships at Isle d'Aix, although she was totally unfit for service; and I am strongly of opinion that two, or perhaps four, of the ships in the road of Brest were of that description. There certainly is no difficulty in the blockade with an easterly wind, if it does not over-blow; but this can only be done by tacking in the night, so as to be close in with Ushant at daylight; which I have always practised, and it is natural to suppose that in my absence the practice was not discontinued.

I rejoice in the speedy recovery of Sir Sam. Hood: you have in him, Sir Thomas Troubridge, and Captain Keats, great seamen, abounding in resources, who disdain putting a farthing in their pockets which does not justly belong to them. When one looks at the barren list of admirals, a promotion to the Flag, including Captain Stopford, (who is also a valuable man,) suggests itself. Should this take place, Sir Samuel Hood and Captain Keats should have Broad Pendants and Captains, or they will be worn out.

The sedentary application at the Admiralty is very inju-

rious to bilious habits, and Admiral Markham has suffered by it more than once. You will find in him firmness and integrity to the back-bone, happily combined with ability, zeal, and diligence; and I heartily hope his health will not compel him to retire from the Board while you may wish his continuance there.

I have the honour, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Cawsand Bay, 25th October, 1806.

SIR,

The position in contemplation for the squadron which escorts the expedition under the command of Colonel Crawford to the Cape de Verde islands, is very judicious; but I have great doubts of the wisdom of breaking up what is called the Rochefort squadron, which should cruise further to the westward than it has done during the summer months; for Admiral Almand appears to me the ablest Sea-officer in the French service, and will do an incredible mischief if he gets into the ocean; and Captain Keats has such a perfect knowledge of the coast, from Biscay to Brest inclusive, that a fitter man for the service cannot be found. The disastrous state of the French squadron on the coast of North America leaves you nothing to apprehend from that quarter. Nevertheless, I am of opinion that two ships-of-the-line, sixty-four's, will do; and the Africa may be well spared, and should go out with the large convoy, now about to assemble at Spithead, to return with the homeward-bound trade from the Leeward Islands; one to accompany each of the next convoys from that quarter.

I have the honour, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Cawsand Bay, 26th October, 1806.

SIR,

There is great wisdom in your plan of making Bermuda the depository of naval stores, in preference to Halifax; for the latter place is exposed to an insult from a small French force, and in case of a rupture with America, would fall immediately. Besides, the coast is not approachable during the winter months, while the other is accessible in all seasons, and is of the utmost importance; for, should it fall into the hands of any other power, our homeward-bound trade from the islands would incessantly be in great peril.

I have the honour, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE,

Rame House, 5th November, 1806.

SIR,

I am truly sensible of the early attention you pay to the almost unexampled exertions of the officers of the Hibernia, in directing a number of commissions for Lieutenants to be made out, with authority to me for the insertion of the names of meritorious Midshipmen, which I will strictly attend to. The exact discipline, regularity, and good order in the Hibernia, has had a very extraordinary effect in stimulating the Officers of other ships to endeavour to come up to her. I must do the squadron which served with me in the Tagus the justice to say, that nothing could be more exemplary in conforming to all our maxims; and I will not be unmindful of the young people recommended to me from that quarter in the distribution of the commissions.

I have the honour, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE HON. ADMIRAL CORNWALLIS.

Rame House, 15th November, 1806.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

I have many apologies to make for neglecting to study the case between Admiral Montagu, you, and others, as re-stated; which was occasioned by my being suddenly ordered to the Tagus soon after I received it, upon a very critical embassy, which engrossed all my time, and the subject was entirely forgotten until I received your letter of the 14th ultimo.

There is a position laid down on the part of Admiral Montagu, which, I must confess, astonishes me: it assumes that when any ship or vessel is fitting in a port, although placed by the Board of Admiralty under the orders of a Flag-officer actually at sea, in Torbay, or any other road-stead, the Admiral of the port such ship happens to be in has the command of her to all intents and purposes. This must be cleared up before I can give my opinion: for I have hitherto considered the ship under my orders, or under the orders of any other Flag-officer in actual service, as no otherwise subject to the authority of a Port-Admiral than in what merely relates to their speedy equipment; for, in point of fact, the Port-Admiral is only the organ through which either the Admiralty, or the Admiral under whose command the ships in question are, convey their orders and instructions. I have exercised this power and authority in the most unlimited manner while off Ushant, both in the year 1801 and the present year, and no doubt or question has arisen out of it.

I am, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Rame House, 16th November, 1806.

SIR,

I never will withhold an opinion of men or things, when you see reason to consult me upon either; I therefore frankly tell you, that I do not think the public has suffered in the smallest degree by having declined to serve second in command in the Channel Fleet. At the same time, I certainly have no objection to him as a man; but that he lacks the firmness and steady perseverance of an Officer fit to encounter the various difficulties incident to this service, I have good reason to know, from the lamentable state of discipline and arrangement in which I found the seven years ago, when he had been under Lord . But where to find a substitute I know not. Few men have had the opportunities of studying naval characters I have experienced from fifty-nine years' service, and mixing very much with them in society, until I was honoured with a chief command; and I do not know one Flag-officer upon half-pay, senior to Sir C. Cotton, whom, if I filled the station you do, I could confide in to guard the port of Brest. There is such a deficiency of nerve under responsibility, that I see officers of the greatest promise and acquired character sink beneath its weight. and , brave as lions in the presence of an enemy, are instances in point; and the present order of cruizing before Brest requires that the Fleet should be tacked or wore once at least in the night during an easterly wind, which few Flag-officers can endure.

I have the honour, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Rame House, 17th November, 1806.

SIR,

Admiral Rodney Bligh has always been esteemed a good and brave seaman; but I did not name him in my letter of yesterday because he had a dreadful shake from illness last year, and I am not sure that he is perfectly restored. If he is, with Captain Conn for his Captain, I should have no apprehension; for, next to Mr. Fairfax, the Master of the Royal Sovereign is, I believe, the ablest in the service, and particularly well acquainted with the bay and environs of Brest. I mention Captain Conn, knowing him to be a hardy, expert, practical seaman, which all who know him will vouch for.

I have the honour to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Rame House, 21st November, 1806.

SIR,

No Officer on the Flag List of the Navy is better qualified to command the squadrons before Brest, or so well, as Sir James Saumarez.

I have the honour to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Rame House, 3rd December, 1806.

SIR,

You could not possibly have made a better selection for hardy enterprise than , but he has neither temper nor headpiece for negotiation. In Captain Morris, you will experience every quality which

can adorn a Sea Officer; and he is peculiarly fitted for the Chesapeake. The Hero will sail to join Rear-Admiral Harvey the moment we can get a supply of biscuit, and by her I will direct the Colossus to be sent in, and I will recall the Foudroyant the moment I know where she will be wanted.

The station before Rochefort, although very important on account of the squadron of the enemy at L'Isle d'Aix, under the command of an able officer, who has already done us so much mischief, is very hazardous, and under the orders of any other man than Captain Keats, who possesses so much knowledge of that sea, I should judge improper to be continued during the winter months; and I have placed a chain of frigates in such positions as I hope will get sight of any of the enemy's ships which may escape from either Brest or Rochefort.

The mission of the Second Surveyor with two Master-shipwrights to inspect the two-decked ships in ordinary, is very judicious, and I have no doubt of their finding a sufficient number of them to form a squadron for the Baltic.

In the character of a protector of friendless merit, I thank you kindly for the promotion of Captain Langford, and I have the honour to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

GENERAL MEMORANDUM.

To the respective Captains, Commanders, and Commanding Officers.

Donegal, in Cawsand Bay, 3rd March, 1807.

VERY great inconvenience having arisen in the Fleet under my command from Surgeons neglecting to report in due time to their respective Captains the cases of those men whom they may deem it advisable to send to a hospital, in order that they may be previously inspected by the Surgeon serving on board the ship of the commanding

Officer, by which delay many poor creatures have lost that assistance which a hospital could afford:

It is my direction that you provide for your Surgeon immediately reporting such cases to you in writing, and that they be instantly forwarded to the Officer commanding the squadron, who will take measures that these sick people are, without delay, examined by his own, or some other surgeon whom he may appoint; and you are not to send any patient to a hospital without such previous examination, except in cases wherein danger would accrue from the least delay, a precaution, unfortunately, but necessarily emanating from the abuses which have attended the sudden removal of the sick. ST. VINCENT.

TO COMMODORE KEATS.

Rame House, 9th March, 1807.

MY DEAR SIR,

I congratulate you most heartily on the excellent state of your squadron, after the severe trial you have experienced, which I attribute entirely to your skilful and judicious management of it. The loss of the Atalanta is to be lamented, although one of those accidents a people who combat the elements and watch the ports of the enemy, as we do, are liable to.

Having learned from the Duke of Clarence that the being created a Baronet would be acceptable to you, I lost no time in communicating it to Mr. Grenville, who received the communication graciously, and I will give his memory a jog before you come into port, which is likely to happen very soon; for Sir Richard Strachan, although ready to go wherever he may be ordered, having expressed some diffidence touching his fitness to co-operate with foreign powers, from his deficiency in languages, &c., it has been signified to me that you are intended to command, *ad interim*, the naval force destined for the Baltic. I cannot

express the regret I feel at parting with you; yet I am not so selfish as to attempt to deprive the Country of your eminent services on so conspicuous an occasion; for sure I am that the allied armies will acquire a support by them, which in the final event may put a stop to the career of this second Alexander. Wherever you go, you will be accompanied by the warmest wishes and regards of,

My dear Sir, yours, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO ADMIRAL MONTAGU,

Commander-in-chief at Portsmouth.

Rame, 11th March, 1807.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

I have not judged it right to call upon the Captains of the ships under my orders to account for an appearance of relaxation in their duty, while fitting in a port where your flag is flying, without making the same known to you by sending the letters open for your perusal. I cannot admit that there is any point at issue between us; and I really am at a loss to know what you mean by such an observation. I am, with great regard, Yours, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rame House, 15th March, 1807.

DEAR TUCKER,

Commodore Keats rises in my estimation upon every report I receive of or from him; and it would be a gracious act, and in my opinion a very judicious one, to create him a Baronet, either upon or before his arrival, after being relieved by Sir Richard Strachan. All the Officers who have served under his orders speak of him in the highest terms of admiration; and I believe him to be, taking him all in

all, the most promising Officer on this side the Atlantic, and one who must soon be at the head of our fleets.

If my cough does not abate soon, I shall burst a blood-vessel, or expire by suffocation; in this state I am totally unfit to proceed to sea. I thank you for entering my proxy, as I would not for the world be left out from giving support to a measure * on which I am sure the preservation of all that is dear to us depends.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rame House, 16th March, 1807.

DEAR TUCKER,

I wonder it did not occur to a late Court-martial that the very best means of teaching a man to command was to put him in the way to learn to obey; and had they sentenced him to be placed at the bottom of the list of Post Captains, the punishment would have been much more appropriate than passing the most severe censure. Captain Otway will be useful in the Baltic; Keats likes him much; and though I shall be sorry to part with him, the Public service has always been, and I trust ever will be, my Polar star.

I am full of apprehension that any failure of engagement to the Irish Catholics will never be forgiven, and that if the French Emperor can throw ten or fifteen thousand men into that country, we shall lose it; then what is to become of this? God forbid, therefore, that the smallest alteration should be made in the bill to enable Catholics to serve in the Army and Navy.

In case of a change of Ministry I haul down the Union; so pray keep a sharp look out.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

* That for the Relief of Roman Catholics.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Rame House, 26th March, 1807.

SIR,

If anything could have added to the unmerited marks of attention and regard I have received from you during your able and honest administration of the affairs of the Admiralty, your obliging letter of the 22nd would achieve it. I have most religiously complied with your injunctions in filling the blanks of the three commissions you have been so good as to send me. That of Commander is given to Mr. Ramage, in preference to three Lieutenants who sailed with me as Midshipmen in the Ville de Paris, and were promoted from her while I commanded in the Mediterranean, because of his superior merit and ability, although they are deserving, but not in an equal degree. The support I have received from the Board under your auspices has enabled me to restore the Channel Fleet to the vigour in which I left it, seven years ago, and I shall be most happy to hear of it continuing in the same state after I take my departure.

I have the honour to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Mortimer Street, 1st April, 1807.

SIR,

No language can express my feelings upon the receipt of your more than kind letter of the 28th of March. My heart is so full, I can only give it vent by assuring you that to the last hour of my life I shall endeavour to give proofs of the high respect, esteem and regard with which

I have the honour to be, &c. ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Mortimer Street, 24th April, 1807.

DEAR TUCKER,

To my great joy and satisfaction, the order is come, and runs: "Whereas we think fit you should haul down your flag, and come on shore; you are hereby required to haul down your flag, and come on shore;" signed "Gambier, Bickerton, Ward."* The sooner this order is acknowledged and carried into effect the better; and I will thank you to come hither as soon as you have breakfasted, and do the needful; for *I mean to be very prompt in my obedience.*

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO COMMODORE KEATS.

Mortimer Street, May 20th, 1807.

MY DEAR SIR,

You have done everything becoming the character of a great Officer; and it would be very inconsistent with my conduct through life to comment upon the answer you have received from Mr. Secretary Marsden. Heartily wishing you all manner of prosperity, believe me to be, with the truest regard and esteem,

Very faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

* Members of the succeeding Board of Admiralty.

CHAPTER V.

Lord St. Vincent in Private Life.—The loss of Sir Thomas Troubridge.—Lord St. Vincent's Parliamentary Conduct.—Buonaparte's opinion of Lord St. Vincent.—Death of Lady St. Vincent.—Illness compels Lord St. Vincent to winter in the South of France.—He visits Marseilles and Toulon.—Returns to England.—His last illness and death.

THE bodily infirmities of old age had now compelled Lord St. Vincent to withdraw from all active employ in his Country's service, retiring, as Mr. Sheridan had very happily said, "with his triple laurel, "over the enemy, the mutineer, and the corrupt." That his Lordship's departure from active life was the cause of great regret to the virtuous and to the patriotic; that his return was solicited to the Fleet and to the Official Scene; and that, being too infirm to comply, his own reflections becoming a delightful retreat from the dissensions and agitations of faction and politics, he passed the remainder of his days tranquilly, and in the dignified recollection of years nobly honourable in his Country's service, will not now be matter of surprise. May we not rather join in the great Orator's exclamation over the incorruptible warrior and statesman of his Nation,—"Was it possible that such a character "should not prepare for itself a pleasant old age?"*

* Poterat-ne tantus animus non jucundam efficere senectutem?—CICERO.

From this period the attempt to present the history of Lord St. Vincent's life in a continuous narrative is relinquished. From henceforward we quit the important events in which this great man participated, to run through some disconnected notices of subsequent minor incidents of his days, which may have called forth any further exhibition of mind; from which, nevertheless, much of individuality is to be gathered, and without which no complete idea of character is to be formed. Upon each occasion, and to the last, identity was equally conspicuous; for though his constitutional health now rapidly gave way; yet it is to be observed that Lord St. Vincent never, in the least degree, exhibited the mournfully forlorn spectacle of a decaying intellect. But, with very few exceptions, it is only in his private life that the remaining glimpses at his Lordship can be offered.

Being gifted as few others were, with the powers of exhibiting his energetic mind, wherever he appeared his manners of themselves alone would almost engross attention. From the moment he entered the room no listless countenance, no wandering eye betrayed unoccupied thoughts. His natural demeanour was grave; but he had all the carriage and ease of polished society, and of the accomplished statesman. He was one of the few eminent public men who were very agreeable in their domestic life: and they who were honoured with most frequent and intimate participation of Lord St. Vincent's remarkable hospitality, can now best testify, the constancy of friendship, the ever-varying kind-

ness, the fund of entertainment with which he charmed them: how he would fascinate the attachment, or command the attention of every description of character; how feelingly he would enter into the griefs of the sorrowful, making their cares his own; enjoy as much as any human being a bit of happy raillery, or piece of good-humoured *piquant* quizzing;* admire the buoyancy of youthful spirits; partake in the cheerfulness of the merriest, even in the joy of a light-hearted child; or at a moment, by a look from his majestic countenance, would check an ill-bred forwardness, or lull the noisy outbreak of the rougher mind. Well can they recollect how, to suit the occasion of the moment's drama, collecting into his face fun and drollery, or with an assumption of an admirably pretended importance, he would, by his playful sallies, or his excellent

* One day an Eton boy, passing his holidays at Rochetts, ran into the dining-room, bat on his shoulder, breast open, in such haste to snap up his lunch, at which he knew he must be punctual, and to resume his innings, that he had scarcely time to say how many runs he had scored, and never for a moment noticed that some fresh guests had arrived since breakfast. When the boy was off again, Sir Pulteney Malcolm, one of the strangers, inquired who he was? and on being informed, and his school, Sir Pulteney said, "that though they might write good Latin verses, he never yet met an Eton boy who could read English." To that no reply was made, except a slight "hem!" from Lord St. Vincent, to whom the boy had read the newspapers for hours at a stretch.

When the assembling before dinner came, as soon as Sir Pulteney Malcolm entered the drawing-room, Lord St. Vincent called the boy, "Tickle-pitcher, here! Do you see that gentleman, Sir?" pointing to the gallant Officer. "Yes, my Lord."

fabrications, raise laughter the most irresistible, and then in an instant resume his natural guise, the serious, over-awing presence of a great man. His stature indicated rather the strength of his robust constitution than elegance: his countenance was one of thoughtfulness, dignity, and a firmness which no man would even attempt to shake. The resolute determination of the blue large eye beneath his bold prominent brow, was overpowering; and such the ubiquity of his attention, that, however numerous the circle, however diversified the characters, not an unusual look, gesture, or tone, beyond the individual's ordinary habit, escaped his penetrating notice. His voice, when exerted, was exceedingly strong; at other times, though it never was quite free from the gruffness habitual to the weather-beaten sailor, yet had it such impressively varying intonation, that even

" Then go you, Sir, sit close beside him, and read that to him," (handing a lamentably long list of bankruptcies, in the Newspaper,) " and read it till he tells you to stop: sing out, Sir!" The boy obeyed as implicitly as would one of his Lordship's former Captains of a line-of-battle-ship before Brest, and read, *seriatim*, about chapmen, dealers, tradesmen, certificates, solicitors, dividends, meetings of creditors, supersedeases and surrenders, in all that enlivening interesting detail. The guests all smiled, except Sir Pulteney, who laughed outright; while Lord St. Vincent stood close before him, looking fixedly at him. At last the boy, not understanding the joke, and fancying the merriment was at his performance, and that Lord St. Vincent was discontented with it, lost his temper; and was so foolish as to show he had lost it. But when at length Sir Pulteney got out, " Stop, stop, for Heaven's sake, stop!" Lord St. Vincent laughingly added, " And now, Sir Pulteney, as young Trimsharp *can* read, do you 'mark, and learn, and inwardly digest.' "

diligently, perhaps you may find just such anot

Owing to long endurance of the most affli most commiserable illness, completely overclo Lady St. Vincent's later years, the hours of life at Rochetts must have felt the absence of tender endearments in softest relief, which inwr themselves with every domestic feeling and c rence, but which the wife alone can shed. Ar tempt to state who, besides his relatives, wer families and friends that most frequently fo that circle of bravery and patriotism, letters science, courtliness and elegance, which Lor Vincent attracted, would be unwise; lest accid omission cause unintentional pain. Rather sl the writer of these memoirs most gratefully sa willing and trusty counsellor which Lord St. cent was to the inexperienced and young; ho tiently to remove their follies he, naturally of hasty temperament, would listen to all their sense; how gently and delicately he would let

of the chosen guests. For them he would manifest such unalterable regard, inviting them and their families to frequent and long visits, that a far more graphic delineation being due of this trait of his Lordship's sterling greatness and true nobility than would be expected from the pen of the preceding pages, and as it is exhibited in the fresh and graceful language which, on the highest authority, (Mr. Hallam's,) is attributable to Lord Essex;* short extracts are selected.

"For most of those that are accounted the chief "men of action, I do confess that I do entirely "love them. They have been my companions both "abroad and at home; some of them, began their "wars with me, most have had places under me, and "many have had me witness of their risings from "Captains and Lieutenants and private men, to "those charges which since by their virtues they "have obtained: Now that I have tried them I "would chuse them for my friends.

"I love them for mine own sake, for I find "sweetness in their conversation, strong assistance "in their employment with me, and happiness in "their friendship. I love them for my Country's "sake, for they are England's best armour of de-"fence, and weapons of offence. If we may have "peace, they have purchased it; if we must have "war, they must manage it.

* Being of the date of 1568, they may perhaps be a curiosity to any whose misfortune it is, not yet to have read Mr. Hallam's Literature of the Middle Ages, from whence (vol. iii, p. 654) they are quoted.

* * * * *

"Before action, Providence makes me cherish "them for what they can do; in action, necessity "makes me value them for the service they do; "after action, experience and thankfulness make "me love them for the service they have done."

On the subject of Lord St. Vincent's religious sentiments, there not being sufficient authority for it, an opinion is not hazarded, further than that cant being his Lordship's utter abomination, he frequently gave to the Author, when a boy, strict advice to be regular in his religious duties. The letters and orders already published show how his Lordship rigidly enforced the presence and the performance of duty by the Chaplains in his fleets; and the following is an extract from a letter from his Lordship to his sister, Mrs. Ricketts.

"The solemnities (Confirmation) Rosehill and his "sister Mary have gone through were very proper, "if they thoroughly understood the mysteries of "them. Learning, as girls and boys generally do, "their Catechism by rote, they cannot comprehend "it; and I have always been of opinion that the "Sacrament should not be administered to any "whose minds are not completely settled."

"The conduct of Lord St. Vincent," says Lord Brougham, with as much truth as force, "was al- "ways high and decorous; and though he had a "singular aversion to cant of any kind, nor to any "more than to overdone Pharisaical morality, he "never lowered, in his own person, the standard of "private any more than of public virtue; wisely

conspicuous men as trustees for the
the people, and, in some sort, repre-
s of the people's virtues."

he was generous and charitable, even to pro-
on, has been already and frequently instanced; yet would he not disobey the dictates of his strong sense and sound judgment: thus when during the peace a kind-hearted lady named Guppy, whose feelings had been excited, perhaps imposed upon, by some begging sailors, took an interest in their behalf, and applied to Lord St. Vincent for charity, his answer, after compliments, &c. was, — "Lord St. "Vincent is always alive to the distresses of his "brother-sailors, and his purse is ever open for their "relief; but until His Majesty's ships, recently put "in commission, are completely manned, he should "do a great injury to his Country and to the Ser-"vice nearest his heart, in which seamen are better "off than in any other, if he were to give the small-"est encouragement to those who disgrace them-"selves by begging, while the King's ships are ready "to receive them." Thus, too, having through life been remarkably scrupulous in all pecuniary transactions, and having, from the day in his Midshipmanhood of the return of the dishonoured bill, preserved the most perfect independence, he had no commiseration for the exigencies of a spendthrift; and a gambler was his detestation. But let a case of real misfortune, especially of an Officer who had deserved well, and whose necessity was not occasioned by his own imprudence, be brought before him; it would be sure to meet relief, promptly, libe-

rally, and with an exquisite delicacy of feeling still more admirable. From particularising such instances it may be well to forbear. The charity to the poor from Lord St Vincent's establishment was equal to that of any mansion in England, where such relief is so remarkable; and the delightful drives with him to inspect the erection of the cottages he built for some industrious labourers can never be forgotten. But of the more munificent displays of generosity the following immediately occur to mind. Hearing by chance that Mr. Dibdin, to whose happy and beautiful poetry such excellent nautical songs are due, was in distressed circumstances, Lord St. Vincent immediately sent him £100, and desired an inquiry into the real state of the case to be made: "For it would be indeed a shame, Mr. Tucker," he said, "that the man who has 'wiled away the mid-watch, and softened the hardships of war,' should be in need, while a seaman enjoys an abundance." To the subscription to supply potatoes to the Irish, he sent £300; and his donation of £500 to the sufferers at Waterloo is so well known as scarce to require mention.

With a kindred feeling of delighting to delicately do a kind act, he allowed his house in London to be always open to those of his relatives to whom the bill of a short stay at an hotel was an object. Again; when a heavy blow of domestic affliction greatly depressed his Secretary's health and spirits; and when, after some interval, it was remarked to his Lordship that Mr. Tucker did not at all rally; for diversion of thought, Lord St. Vincent gave him to understand that, having long wished to visit the

Scilly islands, to look at spots on which a Light-house and Breakwaters, as he always thought, ought to be erected on St. Mary's, to secure a roadstead there during westerly gales,—and the county of Cornwall,* to inquire into the cause of the unaccountable deterioration of copper supplied to the Navy; he now desired his attendance at that inspection; and the kind-hearted, aged "Chief" actually took that long and fatiguing journey with, ostensibly, only these objects, but really, to assuage the grief of an old and attached servant.

Though Lord St. Vincent's education had been nearly all self-acquired, he, nevertheless, had stored his mind with knowledge almost uniform in all the more important branches of National Economy, on

* The great mercantile advantages of a roadstead at Scilly, twenty-five leagues to the westward of the most western port in the Channel, permitting convoys to avail themselves of the most prevalent winds at the entrance of the Channel for six months in the year, during which they could not sail from any other port in it; the distresses and disasters which have ensued from the want of a refuge there; and, above all, the formidable rendezvous which that roadstead would be for an advanced squadron to pursue the enemy, or to protect Ireland, could easily be pointed out, on reasoning which Lord St. Vincent sanctioned; but the space of a note is insufficient.

The rapid decay of the copper now supplied to the Navy is a more difficult, at least an, as yet, less explicable subject. Nevertheless, there are so many facts, on which there is no doubt, that the investigation must be within the reach of science, if Government would only incur the labour and expense, which it yet never has, of bringing science fully to bear upon it. The sum at stake is enormous: the advantage of restoring to our ships the clean copper on which they used formerly to sail, still greater.

which, to the latest years of his life, he would continue gathering all the information within his reach. To read to him, and hear his passing observations, was delightful; and there is no remark on Lord St. Vincent, by those who were competent to pronounce it, which now so readily occurs to memory, as astonishment at the acquaintance with such multifarious subjects which he would continually exhibit; and that it proved to be the more technical and precise, the longer, the more unreserved the discussion. The tactics in the conduct of causes in a Court of Justice was certainly that in which he had most pleasure—as friends and companions, Lord Erskine and Sir Samuel Romilly were his prime delight; but the other affairs of national proceedings, — the statistics of our own and foreign Countries,—the variety of interests involved in our own and foreign trade, all seemed equally familiar to him. But if the author were asked, of what now his own remembrance of Lord St. Vincent personally is most forcible? he would answer that, next to his abounding kindness, it is of the steady meditative look of his intellectual majestic countenance, while listening to anything of importance, while others discoursed and reasoned, and his powerful independent mind was pondering, discriminating, judging; and then, when the opinion did come, of the originality and the depth of thought, the irresistible pounding force with which he overwhelmed the audience, omitting nothing to be noticed, demolishing the chance of reply; and of the invariable pause that followed, — that 'unto him men gave ear and waited;' and that 'after his words they spake not again.'

Prizing nothing higher than perfect independence, Lord St. Vincent invariably lived within his means. But he detested shabbiness. The sums Mr. Sheridan had from him were frequent and generous; yet in his own habits Lord St. Vincent was, from early practice, uniformly economical, and in the public and private expenditure of money no one was more pure; nor has all the malignity with which even he was assailed, ever breathed a hint of the slightest departure from integrity. He expended nothing on selfish gratification; but beyond that, he had to the fullest extent all the thoughtlessness about money, and all the aversion to keeping accounts, which characterise the English sailor. Figures he would delegate to others, himself entirely careless, except that his expenses did not exceed his income; and on an occurrence happening which required a considerable sum; he sent for his Secretary, to take steps, which Lord St. Vincent thought necessary, of selling land to raise money; when, to his surprise, he found that he had some thousands at his Banker's, of which, in forgetfulness, he was as entirely ignorant as if he had never possessed them.

The first occurrence to himself individually at this period, of which memorandum remains, presents Lord St. Vincent in deep grief. It was for the loss of Sir Thomas Troubridge. The earliest written intimation which is at hand of his Lordship's anxiety for the safety of the ship is as this short postcript to a letter: "O Blenheim, Blenheim! where are you?" Mr. Tucker shortly after visited Rochetts, and from his notes it is to be gathered, that "Any news of

the Blenheim?" was so regularly Lord St. Vincent's first inquiry, when the day's post-bag was unlocked; and then, when this was too long answered in the negative, "Where is the Blenheim? what can have become of the Blenheim?" was so frequently in the course of the day his ejaculation to himself; that it was manifest that his mind was grievously oppressed by the forebodings he could not smother: that then after awhile he became quite silent on the subject, was observed to take less part in general conversation, and to be very depressed in spirits. The workings of his breast are afterwards to be seen in some more sentences from subsequent letters to his Secretary: "I shall never see Troubridge's like again!" —"I loved that invaluable man!"—"I have this "instant received a letter from Baird, giving a cheer- "less account of the Blenheim, which has affected "me to such a degree that I can do nothing more "than assure you of the sincere regard and esteem "of your staunch friend."—"George Grey writes me "that the Monmouth is fitting for a flag, and that "report says O'Brien Drury is to proceed to the "Cape of Good Hope in her, with the appointment "of command! But if this is so, the Admiralty have "given up the Blenheim! for unless our incompara- "ble friend Troubridge applied to be relieved, it is "hardly possible such a measure should be taken, if "the existence of him was not despaired of; the "idea of it has affected me very much. I am quite "upset, and cannot banish melancholy melancholy "from my mind, sleeping or waking."

It was a wish, second only to that of doing towards Lord St. Vincent the duty due to a benefactor, to have added the still much desired notice of the life and services of Sir Thomas Troubridge; but the loss of papers, and other circumstances beyond control, prevent it.

That Lord St. Vincent, whose *forte* lay in the unerring discernment of character, certified Captain Troubridge as "the ablest adviser and best executive Officer in the British Navy, *with honour and courage bright as his sword*," has already been seen in admiration of the hero himself, and of the pen that delineated him; so in 1806, in reply to some note from Sir Isaac Coffin, his Lordship wrote, "Many thanks for your suggestion, but Sir Thomas Troubridge is higher in my estimation than the list of the whole Navy can produce." On another occasion his Lordship called him "the Bayard of the British Navy," while Lord Nelson nobly wrote, "I well know he is my superior; and I so often want his advice and assistance," crowning it with, at another time, calling him "as a friend and an Officer, a nonpareil." To such beautiful descriptions of a character, which the erect and noble figure, the handsome, open, manly countenance of the hero himself still more brightly exhibited, perhaps nothing ought to be added; but affection for his memory irresistibly impels a few words more, though with the certain conviction of their utter inadequacy. For to say that in his politics Sir Thomas Troubridge was the staunch support of liberal principles and of

freedom, and the uncompromising advocate of thorough reform; that in his private life he was the idol of his family, the charm of society, the very rock of friendship, and the fortress of honour, only falls miserably short of his attributes.

Being a little deaf, and yet desirous that nothing of what was going on should escape him, the close attention which he paid made him the more alive and enlivening. His manners, always forcible, animated, and quick, were sometimes impetuous; so much so, as once to have well nigh cost him his life. He very nearly fell into the hands of the Despard conspirators, who most assuredly would have killed him. Mr. Giles, Lord St. Vincent's coachmaker, who detected and made known these traitors, one night took Sir Thomas Troubridge to take a peep through a roof at them sitting in their council; and so absolutely uncontrollable was Sir Thomas's animosity and rage on the "traitorous villains," that it required the utmost effort to keep him from darting in, to arrest them at once; indeed, his noise did attract the traitors' attention, and they drew their pistols and searched. A different and more humorous anecdote of Sir Thomas's animated manner, may perhaps be still less known.

One day while walking from St. James's Park to the Admiralty, he was saluted and called by his name by a trooper lounging about the Horse Guards. On asking sharply "How do you know me, Sir?" Sir Thomas found, that there, disguised in regimentals, stood before him, positively one of his old Culloden's, even one of her fore-top-men; a man he

knew had not run, and who therefore must have voluntarily become *a soldier;* and who on further interrogation was discovered to have actually induced no less than ten of his shipmates to follow his example! Seamen to become soldiers! this was the very climax of atrocity. Away flew Sir Thomas's self-command; and seizing the soldier by the uniform collar, the disappointment and displeasure he exhibited were indeed very violent; but then in a moment the ridiculous absurdity in the earnest promise by the terrified man, that "if forgiven only this once he would never do so again," gave the happy turn to excited sensibility; brought a hearty laugh from his old Captain; and sent him into the Admiralty in the merriest mood, where this "Frenchman-like desertion of the cloth," was duly reported to the Board, with "Oh that I can have been for so many years so deceived in that rascal!"

In a life, from a very early age, nearly always at sea, Sir Thomas Troubridge's acquirements were few beyond what a vigorous understanding would unwittingly collect in the course of a professional career; but the extent of his knowledge in whatever related to the naval service; the acuteness of his intellect; his perception of all the points however distant, all the circumstances however various, which ought to be considered; his sound judgment; his fearless decision; and his excellent counsel, were almost without parallel.

Only an infantine recollection of Sir Thomas Troubridge, scarcely more than of his splendid features and noble presence, and of his kind delightful

gambols with children, is retained by him who ventures these statements; but his father knew Sir Thomas intimately and thoroughly; and from the frequent anecdotes and descriptions which Mr. Tucker used to give, a lively imagination of the individual character was imbibed; and hence it happened that one evening the son, quite unexpectedly, englished to the father, who was entirely ignorant from whence it came, and of whom it spoke, the historian's character of Themistocles, and then asked who it was? "Who? why Troubridge; and the man himself to the very life!" was the reply; wherefore, and though the passage is in every schoolboy's mouth, the relatives of this great Sea Officer are requested to pardon the liberty of citing Mr. Smith's translation of it.

"For in Themistocles the strength of nature was
"most vigorously shown, and by it, he was so highly
"distinguished above the bulk of mankind, as to
"deserve the greatest admiration. By the mere
"force of his natural genius, without any improve-
"ment from study, either in his youth or more ad-
"vanced age, he could give the best advice on
"sudden emergencies with the least hesitation, and
"was happy in his conjectures about the events of
"the future. Whatever he undertook he was able
"to accomplish; and where he was quite inexpe-
"rienced, he had so prompt a discernment, that he
"never was mistaken. In a matter of ambiguity,
"he foresaw with extraordinary acuteness the bet-
"ter and the worst side of the question. On the
"whole, by the force of natural genius, he was most
"quick at all expedients, and at the same time

" excellent beyond competition, of declaring in-
" stantly the most advisable measure of acting on
" every occurrence." *

Lord St. Vincent's health was now so shattered, that for its sake alone he was unable to reside long at a time in London. Rochetts became his principal abode; but upon great and stirring occasions his Lordship was found in his place in the House of Lords; and would express, after his own manner, the strong feelings which were excited.

Upon all leading principles on foreign and domestic policy on which he had already expressed matured opinions, to the last he preserved consistency; when any new conjunctures arose demanding an exercise of judgment and discretion, he exhibited the same master-mind as in the question of Canada in 1782, letting it be clearly seen that to unreflectingly resign his thoughts and conduct to the guidance of any human being, or to any political section, was as abhorrent from his independence of mind, as to contemplate resistance to lawful commands, was shocking to his allegiance to the State. Though on minor points he frequently differed from the Opposition, yet to the end of his life he offered one uniform resistance to Tory government; his proxies were entrusted to only Whig statesmen.

In 1807, when Lord Grenville introduced the

* The scholiast might quarrel with the translation here of *αντοσχεδιαζειν*, but who will condense it into one word?

Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, Lord St. Vincent opposed it, stating his reasons.

He deprecated the measure, "which, if passed, "would, he was satisfied, have the effect of trans- "ferring British capital to other Countries, which "would not be disposed to abandon such a pro- "ductive branch of trade. As to the humanity, "so much contended for, it would be well if noble "Lords reflected upon this question, whether hu- "manity really was consulted by the abolition. If "it were, their arguments would be well founded; "but from his own experience he was enabled to "state, that the West India islands were Paradise "itself to the Negroes, compared with their native "Country. Knowing this, which, upon inquiry, it "was in the power of any noble Lord to ascertain, "he was surprised at the proposition before the "House; and, considering the high character and "intelligence of the noble proposer, he declared he "could account in no other way for his having "brought it forward, but by supposing that some "Obi-man had cast his spell upon him."

In February, when Lord Walsingham brought up the report of the bill, Lord St. Vincent again took that last opportunity of protesting against the measure, repeating his former arguments.

He strongly condemned the orders in Council which led to the breach with America; and, in 1808, at the dishonourable character of the expedition to Copenhagen, and at the abduction of the Danish fleet, he was still more indignant, as against an exercise of arbitrary power, which not being ab-

solutely necessary for the very existence of the nation, was unjustifiable upon any ground whatever; and as well by the Country as in the House of Peers was it felt, that the only semblance of an argument in favour of the measure, which was urged by Lord Wellesley, that a fleet could not so maintain its position in the Belt as to prevent a passage of troops into Zealand, was demolished by Lord St. Vincent as the highest naval authority, who asserted that "Supposing for an instant Zea-"land and the Danish Navy to be in possession of "Denmark, and the French to be in possession of "Holland, still it would be even more practicable "to invade this Country from Boulogne than to in-"vade Zealand from Holstein; and as to the state "of the Danish Fleet, why it seemed to him to be "exactly what it was eight-and-forty years ago, "when first he knew it." To this statement, and the argument resulting from it, Lord St. Vincent then challenged contradiction, but it was not attempted, though Lords Cathcart and Gambier were present.

The session of 1809, immediately following the Convention of Cintra,* was the next occasion of his

* Besides being a sample of the playful manner in which Lord St. Vincent would sometimes, as anything of moment turned up, transmit his opinions to his Secretary, the following, about the coast of Portugal, written after the Convention of Cintra, may not be uninteresting information to the young sailor.

"An old experienced seaman, who has frequented the coast of Portugal and the Tagus nearly half a century, assures you, that the south-west winds rarely blow home until the very near approach of the autumnal equinox, often later; the first rains gene-

delivering his opinions. Parliament met in February. As soon as the address, in echo to the speech from the throne, was read to the House of Peers, Lord St. Vincent rose and said,

" That the address just read was such as no man
" who had a veneration for his Sovereign, or a love
" for his Country, could ever assent to. Some parts
" of it, which went to express a determined hos-
" tility to the common enemy, and which went to
" declare the firm determination to carry on the
" war with him, all must approve. But when I
" advert to the manner in which the opposition to

rally producing them; the journals of ships and diaries of weather kept at Lisbon, by the Rev. Mr. Hill and others, will prove this. Peniche, sheltered by the Burlings, is a good anchorage; there is also anchorage under the Burlings. The Portuguese Brazil men and other traders often anchor in Cascaes Bay, and continue there until the wind favours them to enter the river. But putting aside these favourable circumstances, was there not a certain resource in removing the victuallers ashore? Flour, close packed as it is, suffers little by being in the water, beef and pork not at all. How many of the human race never touch a bit of bread. The vicinity of Cintra abounds in the most wholesome fruits of all kinds.

" An old soldier here asserts that an army once in possession of the defiles of Cintra, it is an easy march of a few hours from thence to Cascaes Bay, by descending into an open plane, which extends to the margin of that Bay. When arrived there, our squadron would have landed five or six thousand seamen and marines.

" Fort St. Julien is overlooked by a commanding height at no great distance; from whence the buckles of the shoes of the Artillery may be seen upon the platform. Why are not Sir Charles Cotton and Captain Neave examined upon these points?

" N.B. The better the weather, the more certain you are of northerly windsupon the coast of Portugal."

been conducted on the Peninsula of Eu-
as wholly impossible not to express both
and indignation. I will assert in the face
the Country, and the face of the world, that it
is the greatest disgrace that has befallen Great
" Britain since the days of the Revolution; and this
" I openly declare, whether I take into considera-
" tion the manner in which the war is carried on in
" Portugal or the way in which our troops have
" been sent there.

" Transports have been hired, and great merit has
" been attributed to the ingenuity of ministers in
" providing these transports; but let the public be
" undeceived upon this head; there is not a tittle of
" merit in the case; it is only to go into the market
" and offer a little more than the market price, and
" transports are to be obtained in abundance; I
" wish, however, to notice the important services to
" which these transports have been applied; why
" truly they were at last employed to convey the
" rascally ruffians whom Junot commanded to that
" part of France which was nearest the boundaries
" of Spain, that they might as speedily as possible
" again be brought into action with more effect
" against our own soldiers; so that these devils are
" at this moment harassing the rear of our retreat-
" ing army. The impolicy of sending British troops
" to Portugal I have always disapproved; but with
" the result of the war there I am disgusted; and
" the delay that prevailed before we sent a man
" towards Spain is disgraceful. In fact, it would
" seem, my Lords, as if Ministers had not a geo-

" graphic knowledge of the Country through which " they were to pass, and that they ought to go " again to school to make themselves masters of it. " But one would suppose that their ignorance of " that species of knowledge was become official, for " ' a heaven-born Minister,' just after he first came " into power, asked ' whether Port Mahon was in " Europe or not,' and just the same ignorance did " the persons at present in power manifest, when " they sent an army to traverse a wild and inhos- " pitable country, at the very commencement of the " rainy season, to drink new wines, and to be over- " whelmed with disease as well as fatigue. So little " confidence do I place in such men that I am " decidedly of opinion that unless they are removed, " the Country will be lost.

" My Lords, I cannot consider the Convention of " Cintra without feeling a sentiment of alarm as " well as of indignation rising in my mind,—the " more especially when I observe the cold-blooded " treaty that gave up a contest with the ships of the " enemy, on a compromise so unworthy the nation's " character. The time was, when the old-fashioned " words of ' sink, burn, and destroy,' were under- " stood and exercised; but now we are to negotiate, " to be ships' husbands; and we take possession by " bargain and by barter, instead of by battles, by " bravery, and by balls: we hold our ships in trust, " by compact, and not in right by conquest.

" My Lords, we have Princes of the Blood, all of " whom are bred to arms: why, then, I ask, are not ' some of these illustrious Personages employed to

"lead our armies? They have made the science of "war their study from their childhood. If they are "not to be employed, I am at a loss to conjecture "for what purpose they were bred to arms. Then "there is a distinguished person near me," (his Lordship pointed to the Earl of Moira)—"one "who has the confidence of the people, who has the "love of the soldiery, and who possesses the esteem "of his Majesty,—why is not such a General as "the noble Lord employed? The reason is evident; "it is because management prevents it. But is it "to be supposed that because a Court of Inquiry "has deemed no further investigation necessary, "that therefore there ought to be no further inves-"tigation? Whenever I look at the terms of the "Convention,—whenever I reflect on the decision "of that Court, I cannot avoid exclaiming, a de-"cision so announced is a blot upon the Country! "Whenever I hear of 'Councils of War' being "called, I always consider them as 'cloaks for co-"wardice,'—so said the brave Boscawen, and from "him I imbibed this sentiment, which time and "experience has completely confirmed. For in-"stance, at Vimiero we gained a victory; but in "the moment that our soldiers were flushed with "conquest, recourse was had to a Council of War, "which, I presume, could only have been necessary, "or, indeed, apologized for, in the moment of de-"feat. Upon what principle, therefore, such an "expedient was then resorted to, I, for one, accus-"tomed to other methods, cannot account: they "only who acted on it can explain it. Just the

" same opinion, my Lords, do I entertain of a Court " of Inquiry: it is a shield to ward off investigation " from Ministers themselves; but I trust that your " Lordships will not be prevented from making a " scrupulous investigation of it, in your own way. " I know the character of the Portuguese exceed- " ingly well: excepting those of the City of Lisbon, " they are as brave a people as any upon the con- " tinent of Europe; and, officered by British sol- " diers, they will present an undaunted front to " Frenchmen. Why, then, is not this expedient " made use of? Ministers ought to know their " value; if they do not, their ignorance is inexcusa- " ble. If the House does its duty, it will imme- " diately proceed to the foot of the throne, and " there will tell the Sovereign the bold truth, that " if He does not remove His Ministers, He will " lose the Country. These, my Lords, are the sen- " timents of my heart. I speak them, as a solemn " duty, which I have found myself bound to ex- " press. It is probably the last time I shall ever " trouble your Lordships, and I wish your Lordships " a good night!" said the noble Earl, taking up his hat, and walking out of the House.

While Lord St. Vincent delivered the foregoing speech, it was universally understood that the Prince of the Blood whom he wished to be placed in the command of our armies was, His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, of whose military talents and capacities, ever since he served with Him in the West Indian campaign in 1794, Lord St. Vincent entertained a very high opinion. Among the few re-

maining letters which were addressed to Lord St. Vincent is the following, which His Royal Highness wrote on this occasion; and that which will follow, from Lord Moira, has also its own interest.

FROM HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF KENT.

Kensington Palace, 9th February, 1809.

MY DEAR LORD,

It was only yesterday that, by the merest chance in the world, I learnt from a friend of mine the very flattering manner in which you had alluded to me in the House of Lords, in the speech you made at the opening of the Session, or I should long since have endeavoured to express to you my gratitude for your kindness to me in so doing, and how highly I felt honoured by that public testimonial of your good opinion: indeed there is no part of my life to which I look back with so much pleasure as the short time I passed in the West Indies, when I had the good fortune of serving with you and our deeply lamented friend Lord Grey, when the first object of my ambition was, to gain your joint approbation, as it has ever since been my greatest pride to think that I have been so fortunate as to succeed in it. My regiment being at Chelmsford, I intend, when the weather gets settled, so that I can see them out of doors, to run over some morning to pay them a visit; and if your Lordship should happen to be at Rochetts, and will permit me to take a mutton-chop with you, in my way home in the afternoon, I shall be delighted to

have the opportunity of repeating to you in person how truly I am, with every sentiment of friendship, esteem, and regard, my dear Lord,

Yours most faithfully and sincerely, EDWARD.

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF KENT.

Rochetts, 11th February, 1809.

SIR,

Having never let slip an opportunity of doing justice to the merits of any Officer of the Army or Navy, I should have been unpardonable to have missed so fair an occasion of stating the military acquirements of the Princes of the Blood, at a moment when they are neglected by Ministers, and libelled in almost every public print. Of your Royal Highness's services I was happy to treat, because I had the good fortune to witness them.

Lady St. Vincent and myself shall be proud to receive your Royal Highness at this place whenever it suits your convenience; and I have the honour to be, with great respect, your Royal Highness's very faithful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

FROM THE EARL OF MOIRA.

Donington, July 6th, 1809.

MY DEAR LORD,

The light in which you are justly regarded by the Country would alone be sufficient to make any professional man anxious that his conduct should stand clear with you; but I have peculiar reason for

solicitude that you should not misjudge me. The flattering manner (for estimation expressed by you is not a light compliment) in which you spoke of me in the House of Lords, gives you a right to be assured of my not having wilfully afforded a refutation of your sentiments.

Indubitable proof has been given to me of an unworthy artifice practised by persons so immediately connected with Ministers, that my suspicions cannot but implicate the latter in the procedure. It has been actively circulated that the command of the expedition now preparing was offered to me, and that I insisted on conditions which were so exorbitant as to render the acquiescence of the Cabinet impracticable. This report might reach you; therefore allow me to assert to you, upon my honour, that no proposal of the sort was ever made to me. Nay, I have not even been sounded, either now or on any former occasion, in the remotest manner by any allied with those in office as to my disposition to serve.

To the King and to the Duke of York I professed that I should ever be ready to undertake service, let the order be as sudden as it might; the making a condition is utterly repugnant to my principles. It is true, when employed under Mr. Pitt, I stipulated that there should be nothing ambiguous in the line which I was to hold with the Royalists, whose succour I was to depend upon for any advantageous result of the enterprize. But that was only a definition of a cause of procedure; and the clear understanding of the point between the Cabinet

and me was no less necessary for the public credit than for my own. A bargain as to the amount of means with which I was to undertake, the object never entered into my head, much less one for any personal gratification.

Adieu! my dear Lord; you will not regard as intrusion that which proceeds from the obligation and high esteem with which I have the honour to be, Your Lordship's very faithful servant,

MOIRA.

(Reply.)

TO THE EARL OF MOIRA.

Rochetts, 10th July, 1809.

MY DEAR LORD,

In addition to the value set by every well informed man in the United Kingdom upon your Lordship's military character, which may be justly termed public property, the high personal respect and esteem I entertain for you creates an uncommon degree of interest in everything which relates to you; and I cannot express the indignation I felt on the receipt of your Lordship's very obliging letter of the 6th, communicating the base unfounded calumny which had come to your knowledge, but had not before reached me, owing probably to the retired life I lead. It is difficult to account for such malicious conduct, unless it has arisen from the current of public opinion, which calls aloud for the appointment of your Lordship to the command of the unwieldy machines now in preparation; that this has reached the ears of Mi-

nisters there can be little doubt; and under the heavy responsibility they have placed themselves, this false and wicked insinuation may have been resorted to, in the vain hope of deceiving the public; and it is to men capable of such vain artifices that the fate of the empire in this perilous moment is committed!

God bless and preserve you, my dear Lord, for the defence of everything dear to us, and rest assured of the lasting regard of your very faithful and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

At the opening of the next year's Session of Parliament, as in the preceding, Lord St. Vincent spoke immediately the Ministerial Address had been read. His Lordship's speech was:—

"My Lords, when I addressed a few observa-
"tions at the commencement of last Session of Par-
"liament to your Lordships, I thought my age and
"infirmities would preclude me from ever again of-
"fering myself to your Lordship's consideration:
"but, my Lords, such have been the continued and
"calamitous events which have occurred since that
"period, that I am once more induced, if my
"strength will admit, to trouble your Lordships
"with a few of my sentiments.

"Indeed, we have wonderful extraordinary men
"in these days! men who have ingenuity to blazon
"with the finest colours, to sound with the trumpet
"and the drum, in fact, to varnish over the greatest
"calamities of the Country, and who endeavour to
"prove that our greatest misfortunes ought to be con-

" sidered as our greatest blessings. Such was their " course of proceeding after the disastrous Conven- " tion of Cintra; and now, in His Majesty's speech, " they have connected another disaster with a new " triumph! They talk of the glorious victory of " Talavera—a victory which has led to no advantage, " and had all the consequences of a defeat. The " enemy took prisoners the sick and the wounded; " and, finally, even our troops were obliged precipi- " tately to retreat. I do not mean to condemn the " conduct of the Officers employed either in Spain " or Walcheren; I believe they did their duty.

" There is no occasion to wonder at the awful " events that have occurred; they are caused by the " weakness, infatuation, and stupidity of Ministers: " and I will maintain, my Lords, that we owe all " our weakness, all our disgrace, to the weakness " and incapacity of His Majesty's present Adminis- " tration. But what could the Nation expect from " men who came into office under the mask of vile " hypocrisy, and have maintained their places by " imposture and delusion? Look at the whole of " their conduct. The first instance of the pernicious " influence of their principles was their treatment " of a Country at peace with us: in a state of pro- " found peace, they attacked her unprepared, and " brought her into a state of inveterate hostility. " This was a foul act; and the day may yet come " when repentance will be too late.

" Their next achievement was, to send one of the " ablest men who ever commanded an army into " the centre of Spain, unprovided with every requi-

"site for such a dangerous march. If Sir John "Moore had not acted according to his own judg- "ment in the perilous situation to which he had "been wantonly exposed, every man of that army "had been lost to the Country. By his transcen- "dent judgment, however, that army made one of "the ablest retreats recorded in the page of history, "and while he saved the remnant of his valiant "troops, his own life was sacrificed in the cause of "his Country. And what tribute had His Majesty's "Ministers paid to his valued memory?—what re- "ward conferred for most eminent services? Why, "my Lords, even in this place, insidious aspersions "have been cast on his character, and people are "employed in all parts of the town to calumniate "his conduct. But in spite of all the runners and "dependents upon the Administration, the character "of this General will always be revered as one of "the ablest the Country ever saw. After this abor- "tive enterprise, another, equally foolish, equally "unsuccessful, and no less ruinous, was carried into "execution. Another General was sent into the "heart of the Peninsula, under similar circum- "stances, and the glorious victory alluded to has "been purchased by the expenditure of our best "blood and treasure.

"But what, my Lords, shall I say, when I come "to mention the expedition to Walcheren? Why, I "think it almost useless to say a word on the sub- "ject. It was ill-advised,—ill-planned; even partial "success in it was doubtful; and its ultimate object "is impracticable. It is high time that Parliament

" should adopt strong measures, or else the voice of " the Country will resound like thunder in their ears.

"Anybody may be Minister in these days; and " Ministers may flow from any corrupted source:— " they pop in and pop out like the man and woman " in a peasant's barometer: they rise up like tad- " poles. They may be compared to wasps, to hor- " nets, and to locusts. They send forth their pesti- " lential breath over the whole Country, and nip " and destroy every fair flower in the land. The " conduct of His Majesty's Government has led to " most frightful disasters, which are nowhere ex- " ceeded in the annals of our history. The Country " is in that state which makes peace inevitable; " and it will be compelled to make peace, however " disadvantageous, because it will be unable to " maintain a war so shamefully misconducted, and " so disastrous in its consequences."

His Lordship then pointed out injuries which would eventually befal the shipping interest in case of a peace, when almost every ship in the river would have a broom (the sign of being for sale) fixed at its top-gallant-mast-head; and concluded by asking the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Mulgrave) whether it was in contemplation to make a Dock at North-Fleet for the future reception of our fleet, a measure which he, Lord St. Vincent, strongly recommended.

It has been elsewhere * asserted, that after 1810, Lord St. Vincent never again appeared in the House of Peers. This is an inaccuracy which on

* Brenton's Life of Earl St. Vincent, vol. ii.

many reasons it is necessary to point out; but chiefly because of the momentous importance of the subjects soon afterwards debated there; and of the maintenance which Lord St. Vincent, as became him, preserved of his consistency.

In the long and stormy debates, and in the late divisions in the session of 1811 upon the restrictions which fettered the delegation of the Royal Prerogative to the Prince of Wales, Lord St. Vincent was present; the more heartily co-operating with the leading Whigs, because in supporting them then, two of his own predominant political feelings were called into play; his staunch attachment to Royalty, and his ardour for popular rights. The true Whig doctrine, that it is *for the people* that the Royal Prerogatives are a trust, being then the touchstone of the argument against the Minister, who was for reducing the Regent to as dependent helplessness as could be accomplished.

So, too, on the question of Roman Catholic Emancipation. How strenuously Lord St. Vincent advocated religious tolerance, it would be tautology to repeat in assertions, which, after all, would very inadequately represent his zeal for the freedom of conscience. His Lordship, therefore, was in his place in the House at most of those debates; at last, when so ill and feeble as to be obliged to solicit the House's permission to sit and speak wearing a cap, to protect his head. His proxy was invariably intrusted to the same purpose. His sentiments, in his correspondence on it were: "Everything that is "dear to us is perilled upon this." "Rebellion in

"Ireland depends upon it."—"I am full of appre-
"hension that any failure of engagement to the
"Irish Catholics will never be forgiven; and then,
"if the French Emperor could throw ten or fifteen
"thousand men into that Country, we might lose it;
"and then what is to become of this?"—"God
"forbid that any the smallest alteration should be
"made in the Bill to enable Catholics to serve in
"the Navy and Army." Nor would a volume suffice to condense his continually appearing advocacy of the same principles.

In the same spirit, Lord St. Vincent exerted himself to his utmost to procure the election of Lord Grenville to the Chancellorship of Oxford, when his Lordship was opposed by Lord Eldon; and when victory attended the noble advocate of Catholic emancipation, Lord St. Vincent wrote, he "rejoiced in the triumph of rationalism and liberty "over stupid oppressive intolerance, senseless bi-
"gotry, and fraudulent priestcraft."

Again: he co-operated in assistance to a Catholic college, of the order of Franciscans, on his property in Staffordshire. And hearing, in 1818, that efforts were to be made to suppress the order of Jesuits, thus his Lordship wrote to a friend at Rome, who was in frequent intercourse with the Roman Court:

"I have heard with indignation that Sir John
"Cox Hippesley has gone to the Congress at Aix-
"la-Chapelle, with a view to obtain a decree for
"the extinction of the Jesuits! I therefore beseech
"you to cause this letter to be laid before his Holi-
"ness the Pope, as a record of my opinion; that

" we are not only obliged to that order, the Jesuits, " for the most useful learning and discoveries of " every description, but that they are now necessary " for the instruction of the Catholic youth through- " out the civilized world."

With a kindred feeling on the behalf of the free exercise of sincere worship, he subscribed liberally (it is believed 100*l.*) to building, in Whitechapel, a chapel for the Jews; nor would the illiberal unfounded argument that the English Jews are not Englishmen have had any weight with him; or, at least, to "comfort the afflicted" had more; for he also subscribed liberally to their Hospital.

On a question which at present attracts considerable public attention, the food of the poor in the free trade in corn, Lord St. Vincent thus indicated his opinion in letters to his Secretary in 1815.

" If you have an interview with Lord Grenville " or Mr. Thomas Grenville, inform one or both of " them that I reprobate any alteration in the Corn " Laws, and that I hope that the measures (in- " creased duty) agitating in the House of Commons, " will be manfully resisted. I am for removing all " restrictions both on import and export, and for " letting the article take its own level." A few days after:

" I thank you kindly for explaining to Lord " Grenville my detestation of the Corn Bill, which " took place before I knew his Lordship's opinion " upon this subject; and a more disgraceful measure " to both Houses of Parliament never was brought " forward. In a word, it is a sacrifice of the public

" good to the sordid interests of the members of the " two Houses."

So far from being panic-struck, as the Ministry of 1812 were, by a powerful exhibition of popular feeling at public meetings, to discuss the propriety of continuing the war, the general conduct of Ministers and national grievances; — on every rational ground Lord St. Vincent thought such meetings, provided they were constitutionally conducted, of very great importance, and he frequently attended them. No information has been collected of his Lordship having ever delivered his sentiments there: had not the County of Staffordshire been informally convened, he was to have moved the address; but, together with the leading Whigs of that County, he abstained from a meeting liable to that objection. If Lord St. Vincent had spoken, it is probable that, besides the sanction of his great name, his strong and energetic language, and his exceedingly animated manner, would have created a powerful impression on the multitudes assembled.*

It may be perceived from his speeches in Parliament, that, as to the ministerial management of the war, Lord St. Vincent did not as a statesman think that the efforts and energies of this Country were always wisely directed, but that in our coalitions and alliances the Ministry shewed as little sagacity,

* But in venturing that conjecture, the writer by no means wishes it to be understood that it is his opinion that a senator's oration (which certainly Lord St. Vincent never attempted) would be lost on the people; for, on the contrary, he believes them to be keenly sensible of most of the pleasures and arguments of true eloquence.

as they did husbandry of our dwindling resources in drawing out such enormous sums for subsidies; and his Lordship testified his disapprobation of their conduct by voting in the minority on Lord Grey's motion in 1809, which was in reality to censure the Cabinet. But still his opinions were the result of his own reflections; he would receive them from no one; nor could the bias of party in the least warp his judgment.

Accordingly in 1812, when Buonaparte, on the eve of his fatal war with Russia, volunteered overtures to England for a peace, and when an ineffectual correspondence between the two governments ensued thereon, the Opposition in England made simultaneous speeches in both Houses of Parliament, censuring the Cabinet for neglecting an opportunity which might never again occur. But when these speeches were read to Lord St. Vincent, — "No," was his reply to Dr. Baird; "our friends "in Opposition are now all wrong: we must not "accept any terms of peace with Buonaparte. It "is clear that no reliance can be placed on any "engagement he may enter into. Nothing is left "to us but to go on, to economise, and trust to the "chapter of accidents." And he at once despatched a proxy to support his opinions.

His conjectures on the peace of Fontainbleau may be extracted from a letter to his sister, Mrs. Ricketts. — "What pledges may have been made by the "Allies touching our being included in this treaty "of peace, I know not; but as they are all more or "less interested in curtailing our maritime rights,

" I have great apprehensions upon that subject: but " we may hourly expect to hear of a desperate at- " tempt of the tiger to escape the rails that en- " viron him, in which case an ocean of blood will " be spilt." Another, to Mr. Tucker: — " I cannot " help smiling at the title, independence, and " £80,000 a-year given to Napoleon!" And then, when the tiger did escape:—" I am not surprised " at his rapid march to Paris; but there can be no " doubt of the ultimate success of the overwhelm- " ing confederacy against him — because, it is now " against *him alone*, and no longer against France " and her forty million population."—" Although I " much fear the extensive alliance we are endea- " vouring to form will not long hold together, I am " decidedly of opinion, that with only a fair prospect " of union, a vigorous effort should be made to rid " the world of this horrid disturber of the peace of " mankind, nothing short of which can *ensure* our " safety; and I have, in consequence, requested " Lord Grenville to exercise my proxy accordingly. " We must all prepare for great sacrifices, as the " pecuniary burthen of the war must inevitably fall " upon us."

After Waterloo came the Peace; and, in the vicissitude of human events, it was England's destiny to imprison her once mightiest and deadliest foe. On this Lord St. Vincent expressed himself precisely as would have been expected. "

" has lost himself, in my opinion, by his vul- " gar and disgraceful abuse of Buonaparte, which I " abhor as much as I admire Maitland's treatment " of the fallen Emperor. I, nevertheless, rejoice that

" he is so disposed of as, in all probability, to pre-
" vent his again destroying the peace of the world."

The conduct of Sir Frederick Maitland, to which Lord St. Vincent then alluded, was the mode and manner in which that truly noble-minded Captain entertained the mighty fallen suing for mercy. Some unworthy remarks on the reception had been made in some Tory newspaper; but Lord St. Vincent immediately wrote to his *élève* (" Johnny Gilpin" of old) and expressed his high approbation of the exhibition of the proper feeling. A copy of his Lordship's letter has not been found, but Sir Frederick Maitland's reply should be inserted, as the generous effusion of a brave sailor.

TO EARL ST. VINCENT.

" Bellerophon, August 9th, 1815.

" MY DEAR LORD ST. VINCENT,

" Your approbation of my conduct more than
" repays me for all the vexation and trouble I have
" experienced, in the execution of a most painful
" duty; I have ever looked up to your Lordship as
" my friend, and the man to whom I was most
" indebted in this world; it is therefore most grate-
" ful to my feelings to find you are satisfied with
" the manner in which I have conducted myself. I
" may with truth repeat, His Majesty has not a
" more loyal subject, or one more attached to his
" Country; but when a man was fallen from such a
" height as Buonaparte, I saw no cause to insult
" him; some of the papers have abused me for
" paying him too much respect; if I erred, it was
" not intentionally; and having passed all my life at

" sea, I am ignorant of the etiquette of courts: allow " me again to repeat, how proud I feel in your " Lordship's approbation. My wife joins in best " wishes for your health; and believe me to be, " with much respect,

" Your Lordship's most attached friend,

" FRED. L. MAITLAND."

Shortly after this—if a slight anachronism in narrative is permitted—when a severity wholly unbecoming England was enforced upon her great prisoner at Saint Helena, an opportunity of expressing his disapprobation of such littleness presented itself to Lord St. Vincent in the presentation of the ex-Emperor's bust, by Captain Tower, to his Lordship; and Lord St. Vincent did not neglect it.

TO THE RIGHT HON. EARL ST. VINCENT.

" November 1st.

" MY DEAR LORD,

" Palmer has conveyed to me that the bust of " Napoleon will be acceptable to your Lordship; I " feel a gratification in presenting it to one who " knows how to respect a great and fallen enemy.

" Ever your Lordship's obedient servant,

" J. TOWER."

TO CAPTAIN JOHN TOWER, R.N.

" Rochetts, November 1st, 1817.

" MY DEAR JOHN,

" I do not know which to value the most; the " bust you have had the goodness to present to me,

" or the admirably expressed note which accom-
" panied it. You do me justice in attributing the
" feelings you so well describe to my character, and
" I blush for those who trample upon a man, many
" of them feared, and all allowed, in the career of
" his military glory, to be an astonishing character.
" Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT."

Much about the same time that England's great Admiral was thus speaking of Napoleon, it happened that Napoleon himself gave an equally unbiassed opinion of England's Admiral to Captain Bowen, whose ship was one of the fleet which held St. Helena in blockade.

It was Napoleon's custom to question every naval Officer who was presented to him concerning their services. When Captain Bowen was interrogated, a part of the conversation was:

Buonaparte.—With whom have you principally served?

Capt. Bowen.—I have been chiefly patronised by Lord St. Vincent.

Buonaparte.—He is a brave man and a very good sailor; the greatest the English ever had, for he kept his fleet in better order. Did he not command off Cadiz when I went to Egypt? and did he not send Lord Nelson after me?

Capt. Bowen.—Yes, he did.

Buonaparte.—Were you with him in the battle off Cape St. Vincent?

Capt. Bowen.—No.

Buonaparte.—Where does Lord St. Vincent live?

Capt. Bowen. — In Essex, about sixteen miles from London.

Buonaparte.—When you return, if you go to see Lord St. Vincent, make him my compliments;—the compliments of an old soldier to a good old English sailor.

In conversation with his niece, Lady Jervis, upon the above dialogue, after a pause, Lord St. Vincent said, "I did what I could to keep them in order; "but a fleet is a difficult thing to manage."

Early in the year 1816, Lady St. Vincent, having through long and mournful illness been debarred the enjoyment of her family's society, died. Before infirmity depressed her health, she constantly exhibited strong sense and kindly feelings; and as a wife, her adoration of Lord St. Vincent was very ardent. A chef-d'œuvre, by Chantrey, is her Ladyship's monument in the church of Stone, in Staffordshire; and the short inscription, which was Lord St. Vincent's own composition, exhibits his neat style:

Sacred to the memory of
MARTHA, COUNTESS ST. VINCENT;
Who was eminently Pious, Virtuous, and Charitable.

At the period of this domestic affliction to Lord St. Vincent, Miss Cordelia Knight, daughter of Admiral Knight, the accomplished Lady to whose superior mind and elegant attainments the education of Her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte of Wales was entrusted, was his Lordship's guest. The decease of Lady St. Vincent took place early

in February, and on the 14th his Lordship received from Miss Knight the pretty stanzas which are presented, and which have an additional value, as coming from her whom our literature hails as the authoress of "Dinarbas," "Knight's Romans," &c., &c.

Lines addressed to Earl St. Vincent on Valentine's Day.

It may, my Lord, a smile impart,
And blunt domestic sorrow's dart,
That now your eye, in life's decline,
Should open on a Valentine:
But when my well known name you view,
You 'll own your handmaid ever true.

From early youth to riper age,
Amid the battle's fiercest rage,
Oh, Jervis! it has been my pride
To stand for ever at thy side;
And never shall this day appear,
Within the circle of the year,
But my St. Vincent's name shall rise
In grateful praises to the skies!

In ages hence, whene'er the sail
Of Commerce courts th' Atlantic gale,
Or when her gallant navies sweep
The foes of Britain from the deep,
The seaman's eye shall never rest
On Cape St. Vincent's lofty crest,
But mem'ry, as the needle true,
Shall raise the grateful sigh for you;
Familiar on their lips shall be
St. Vincent's name and Victory!

And when at midnight's silent hour
The moon her silver light shall pour
Upon the glossy sparkling deep,
The drowsy watch, to banish sleep,
Shall troll the catch or raise the song;
Then shall your deeds the strains prolong,
Your name with Howe's and Nelson's rise;
Oh! then, if leaning from your sphere,
The artless honest praise you hear,
'Twill give a rapture to your heart
Which flatt'ry's voice could ne'er impart!

Though winter now its snows hath shed
Upon thy ever honour'd head,
Still blooms the wreath I placed there,
Nor time itself a leaf shall sear;
For double reverence we pay
To laurels twined with tresses gray;
Your Country's gratitude to you
Is every hour and minute due;
But on this day she calls to mind
When courage true, with skill combined,
Reckless of numbers, led you on,
And Conquest crown'd her fav'rite son!

When Hist'ry's fair emblazon'd page
Shall open on a future age,
When Britain's glory, blazing bright,
Shall burst upon the ravish'd sight,
Amid the brightest stars that shine,
She proudly shall acknowledge thine!
I do assert, and will maintain,
I hold, my Lord, no flatterer's pen;
That what I 've said is just and true,
And known to all the world but you:
I now take leave;—behold in me
Your old companion, Victory!

The correspondence which will close these Memoirs of Lord St. Vincent's Life will exhibit, that in all that concerned the support and vigour of the Navy, he was to the last deeply interested. *Of very much indeed* that transpired, especially in the various branches of the civil department, he strongly disapproved; he used to write and say, "that it "grieved him to see and hear it;" and were there now any use in it, to point out the instances would be very easy. Frequent also were the occasions which he took of writing and speaking of "Lord "Melville's justness in the appointment of Officers" and in the "distribution of the favours of his pa- "tronage."* To any anecdote from the fleet, Lord St. Vincent would listen with absorbed attention; nor could gratitude or good taste have more happily displayed themselves than in offering the last Pendant taken from the French as a present to adorn his Lordship's residence.

One of his Lordship's own *élèves*, Captain Edmund Palmer, of the Hebrus, captured the Etoile, after a two hours' action in only eight fathoms of water, and so close upon the French coast as to be within musket-shot.

* A gentleman, in conversation with Lord St. Vincent, happened to refer to an individual who filled an important situation in the naval department with much talent, but who was generally considered to assume more consequence and authority than properly belonged to his station, and whom the heads of the department were unable to control. Having recited some instances of it, he asked the Earl how *He* would manage if such a person were placed under him? "Sir," replied his Lordship, "I would have him tethered to his desk!"

This battle Lord St. Vincent pronounced to be "one of the best fought single actions in our naval "annals." But the prize's ensign was also the last flag which the French lowered to our navy in the war; to present this to his "Old Chief," was therefore well thought of by the pupil, placing it on the walls of Rochetts, with an inscription, of which it is impossible not to admire the modesty that has veiled the Captain's own name.

The last Tricolor
won
By the Naval Flag of Britain,
The Colours
Of L'Etoile, captured by the Hebrus,
March 27th, 1814,
Most respectfully dedicated
To JOHN, EARL OF ST. VINCENT:
The Offering
Of a Grateful Pupil
To an Illustrious Master.

FROM LORD ST. VINCENT,

In acknowledgment.

"Rochetts, 5th September, 1817.

"DEAR PALMER,

"Proud to possess one of the last won trophies "in the annals of the British Navy, as my beloved "niece will be when I am no more, I beg your ac- "ceptance of my best thanks for this fresh and "distinguished mark of attachment to your early "patron and steadfast friend, ST. VINCENT."

It has been before said, that Lord St. Vincent, though a Whig, was a Whig Royalist; and that is most certain: by a more trusty, loyal defender, the British Crown was never armed. Yet a firmer adherent to the fundamental principles of the English constitution, a more jealous lover of popular rights and freedom, the Nation did not contain. His Lordship has already been seen in both characters; other displays of them still remain.

A communication from the Prince Regent was made to Lord St. Vincent, expressing a regret that his Lordship had not been made an Admiral of the Fleet. But Lord St. Vincent replied: "that no "apology was due to him; if there were any, it was "to Admiral Digby, the senior Flag-officer on the "list; but that if the good old custom of the service "was to be broken through, it was better it should "be done in favour of one of the Royal Family." And in December 1811, when Lord St. Vincent was become the senior Admiral on the list, and when observation was frequent and loud on the much talked-of intended promotion of H. R. H. the Duke of Clarence over his Lordship, to that rank; as soon as the dissatisfaction reached his ear, Lord St. Vincent commanded his Secretary to signify to Mr. Yorke, then First Lord of the Admiralty, and who was understood to have hesitated at the appointment till his Lordship's feelings upon it were ascertained, "that he thought that an Officer "of the Royal Blood was not to be considered as "included in the regulations in that respect, which "otherwise followed, in the Service; and that he

" thought the Duke of Clarence ought to be ap-
" pointed;" which accordingly ensued. But, on the other hand, though there can be no doubt, that, had Lord St. Vincent been in office in 1817, he would have severely enforced the existing law when tumultuous meetings frightened a timid administration into an invasion of the Constitution; yet he frequently expressed his " indignation at the suspension of the Habeas Corpus," and " how intolera-
" ble arbitrary imprisonment of any one" was to him.

As soon as the peace was signed, the oppressive burden of Lord St. Vincent's own thoughts,—the admiration of all who marked his steady attachment to a free and popular Constitution,—was his unceasing desire for disbanding the army, and the reduction of all the enormous establishments which had imperceptibly grown up for its organization. He constantly regarded a standing army as a menace to liberty; and in his correspondence, as in his conversation, the absolute necessity of removing such a formidable source of danger to the Constitution, was so characteristically the object of his constant wish, that his own words must be offered. To Sir Thomas Lennard Lord St. Vincent, in 1816, wrote, in reply to a letter requesting that his Lordship's name might be added to a requisition to the Sheriff to convene a county meeting to petition Parliament against a renewal of the Property Tax. —" Unless a large reduction of the enormous and
" lavish expenditure in the Ordnance Department
" is expressed in the requisition, I cannot consist-
" ently take a part in it. This acceded to, and

" you shall have my hand and heart." From letters, dated 1815 and 1816, to his Lordship's Secretary, are selected the following:

" To our higher political friends, I will thank you " to state, the alarms I feel at the vast strides " making to introduce military government in this " Country, and the necessity there is of reducing all " our military establishments very low; for with " a good navy of durable ships, a large body of our " trusty Marines, and our local Militias, we shall " have nothing to fear from any quarter. The staff " of our army is out of all proportion; and so is " the Artillery, seven-eighths of which might be " dispensed with. It is by rigid economy alone " we can be prevented from national bankruptcy, " yet our profusion increases." — " The rapid ap- " proach of military despotism haunts me by night " and by day. The finger of it is perceptible in the " Courts-martial on and . More " of this when we meet, which I hope will be on " 14*th February*."

" Although I execrate the corn restrictions, I do " not like those riots, which will be made use of " to justify the keeping up of a large standing army; " more, far more to be dreaded than mobs."

" The Militia, Yeomanry Cavalry, and Marines, " form the constitutional land force of this Country. " A standing army is, here, equally dangerous to " the liberties of the people and the stability of the " Throne." — " The moment the army of occupation " is withdrawn, a motion should be made in the " House of Commons, in the form of a Resolution,

" that no British troops should again serve upon " the Continent of Europe as a Contingent. And " when political circumstances render it neces- " sary for us to engage in a Continental war, our " proportion should be furnished in subsidies, can- " non, small arms, clothing, and the residue made " up in money.

" The Army to be immediately reduced to seventy " regiments of Infantry, twenty regiments of Cavalry; " the Household Troops to be reduced in proportion. " A vast reduction of Foot and Horse Artillery and " Engineers. The Waggon-train, although admitted " to have been useful upon the Continent, can be of " none here, and, subject as it is to abominable " abuses, to be annihilated. Sandhurst, Weedon " Barracks, and a great part of the alarming " buildings at Woolwich, with many other such " signs of the times, to be taken down, and the " materials sold. Ten thousand Marines to be " added to the number at present voted to be " added. The troops necessary for the defence of " the territory of the East India Company, to be " paid by it; to be a separate article, and voted as " such. — What is termed the Staff of the Army, " which has been carried to a ridiculous extent, to " be cut down."

These might be extended almost infinitely; but another and remarkable circumstance happening to have exhibited the same opinion from Lord St. Vincent in another quarter, the formation of the United Service Club, reference is preferred to that

corroboration of a horror of military rule being so predominant an ingredient of his character.

Perhaps there now may be some who do not know, that this distinguished Society originated in an association of Military Officers, whose politeness, so peculiarly their own, it was, to offer to the Navy to form a sociable union of both the gallant Services. To enrol the Earl of St. Vincent among them was, of course, an honour to which all would aspire; and, as the most courteous mode of invitation, his Lordship's old friend, who while Colonel Graham, attending the Austrian armies, was Sir John Jervis' brother-in-arms in the campaign of 1796, but then, for his brilliant services, had been ennobled as Lord Lynedoch, and who also was of kindred political sympathy with Lord St. Vincent, was, with excellent taste, selected as the medium of communication. The correspondence itself may alone relate the sequel.

FROM LORD LYNEDOCH.

"Grafton Street, 19th January, 1816.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I was made extremely happy by hearing that "your Lordship had expressed your approbation of "the two Services uniting in the social and familiar "intercourse which would be the consequence of "belonging to the same Club. I, therefore, as "Chairman of the Committee of Management of "the Military Club, trouble your Lordship with "this note, to inclose a copy of the resolutions of a

" General Meeting, held on the 13th instant, and
" also of the Regulations of the Club. At the time
" we did not know that there were other Naval
" Clubs than one formed last year; but, of course,
" we are desirous of communicating with all, con-
" vinced of the advantages to both Services from
" their union in such an establishment.

" Your Lordship's powerful influence may tend
" much to reconcile this measure to those who may
" entertain prejudices against it.

" I have the honour to remain, my Lord, with
" the most sincere regard, your Lordship's faithful
" and obedient servant,

" LYNEDOCH."

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD LYNEDOCH.

" Rochetts, 23d January, 1816.

" MY DEAR LORD,

" I am honoured with your Lordship's letter of
" the 22nd, enclosing certain resolutions of the
" Committee of Management of the Military Club,
" in Albemarle Street. Having been fortunate in
" maintaining a good understanding with the Army
" from the expedition against Quebec, under Vice-
" Admiral Sir Charles Saunders and Major-General
" James Wolfe (on which I commanded a small
" detached squadron at the Falls of Montmorenci),
" to the last hour of my services, I was disposed to
" judge favourably of a measure tending to har-
" monize the two professions; but, upon taking a

more enlarged view of the subject, I must confess, and am free to declare, that such a vast extension of military association in this free Country, coupled with other signs of the times, wears an unconstitutional aspect, and cannot fail to attract the attention of Parliament.

"I have the honour to be, with the most perfect regard and esteem, your Lordship's faithful obedient servant,

"ST. VINCENT."

FROM LORD LYNEDOCH.

"Grafton Street, 30th January, 1816.

MY DEAR LORD,

"The same sentiments of real respect, and, I may say, veneration for your dignified character, which induced me to trouble your Lordship before on the subject of the Club, force me in a manner now to endeavour to do away, if possible, the prejudice which has of late gained admission into your mind against the Institution. It is little to the purpose, and therefore unnecessary for me to assure your Lordship that I should have been the last person to have taken an active part in promoting such an establishment, if I could have supposed it ever could become dangerous to the Constitution of this free Country.

"The idea originated from its being a subject of general complaint, that Officers coming to town occasionally, and for a short time, and being thereby precluded from belonging to the best es-

" tablished clubs, were necessarily dispersed and " drawn into expensive and bad taverns and coffee- " houses, without a chance of meeting their friends " or any good society during their stay in Lon- " don. To remedy this evil, a general club was " formed.

" We have ever since been exposed to calum- " nious charges; on the one hand, that we would " become the ready tools of despotism; on the other, " that our Club would be a hot-bed of grievances, " and that we should thereby become embarrassing " to the executive Government of the Country. We " contented ourselves to submit in silence to such " unmerited censures, trusting to the nature of our " constitution and our conduct to remove such " alarms.

" The Club was, from the first, open not only to " the actual Field-officers of the regular Army, " Militia, and East India Company's Service, but to " all who had ever held that rank in these different " Services; we have since made a proposal of union " with the Navy, which has been favourably re- " ceived. Now, considering how these ranks in " these different Services are filled, it seems next to " an impossibility that any mischievous or dangerous " combination should ever be formed in so mixed a " society, so connected, as they must be, with all " that is best in point of character and property in " the Country, and having ever had it in their minds, " that, while fighting under the King's colours, they " were defending their Country's cause. Should, " unhappily, corruption ever spread itself so uni-

" versally over the land as to carry its baneful in-
" fluence into the bosoms of men bred up with a
" peculiar sense of duty and honour, nothing can
" save the Country from merited ruin. One word
" more *on the point of numbers:* as your Lordship
" seems to think that the '*vast extension*' of the
" Association is an aggravation of the mischief to be
" apprehended. In the first place, it is morally im-
" possible, without an enormous expense to the
" subscribers, to keep up a constant daily club in
" town, composed of *professional* men *only;* such
" members must necessarily be absent on duty even
" in time of peace; and so few, comparatively
" speaking, having fixed residences in the capital.
" In the next, I should really think that your Lord-
" ship, on re-consideration of the subject, would be
" inclined to alter your opinion on that point of
" extension; for the greater the numbers drawn
" from the variety of Services, surely the less the
" risk of any fatal combination taking place.

" I should be most happy to think that this
" explanation could be satisfactory to your Lord-
" ship; but at all events I trust our Institution,
" already formed, will not be made a subject of
" Parliamentary animadversion, thereby throwing
" obloquy against such men as compose it, without
" preventing the continuance of the mischief, if
" there is any.

" I have the honour to remain, with the truest
" regard, most faithfully and obediently yours,

" LYNEDOCH."

TO LORD LYNEDOCH.

" Rochetts, 1st February, 1816.

" MY DEAR LORD,

" Could a club, ever so extensive, be formed of " military men resembling your Lordship, I should " feel no apprehension for our happy Constitution.

" Permit me to assure you, that no difference of " opinion upon this subject can in the smallest " degree affect the pure regard and esteem with " which I have the honour to be,

" Your Lordship's very sincere and obedient " servant, ST. VINCENT."

Before the period of this correspondence, Lord Grenville had brought forward his motion on our Military Establishments in Time of Peace; and on his Lordship's speech, Lord St. Vincent had written, " I am transported with Lord Grenville's speech, as " given in 'The Times;' it contains all I could have " wished to express upon the horrid prospect of " military despotism.—ST. V." It was therefore natural that, being on terms of intimacy with Lord Grenville, Lord St. Vincent should have transmitted the preceding correspondence to him. The reply was:

TO EARL ST. VINCENT.

" Dropmore, January 28th, 1816.

" MY DEAR LORD,

" I am much obliged to you for the communi- " cation of your correspondence with Lord Lyne-

" doch on the subject of the Military Club. From " the first moment that I heard of that Institu- " tion I have regretted it. Measures of this de- " scription cannot be judged without reference " to the accompanying circumstances with which " you have justly coupled it. The effects must, I " fear, be mischievous; the impression very dif- " ferent, I am persuaded, from any that has been in " the contemplation of such men as Lord Lynedoch.

" I shall feel myself much honoured in continuing " to hold your proxy. Believe me ever, my dear " Lord, with the highest respect and regard,

" Most faithfully yours, GRENVILLE."

But let not a perusal of these manifestations by Lord St. Vincent of his aversion to a powerful standing army induce a supposition that he was insensible of the services which had been rendered by those of whom he advocated the return from the Ranks to their class as citizens; nor that he was ungrateful for the safety and glory which they had shed over their Country. Few men were more aware of the share the army had borne in the struggle, which obtained for Europe the honourable peace, by which he was desirous of profiting: and this also Lord St. Vincent manifested; as well in the enthusiasm with which he invariably mentioned the great Captain, the Duke of Wellington, and the debt of gratitude which the Country owed him; as in an opportunity, light in itself, but weighty as coming from Lord St. Vincent, which he took of testifying such sentiments.

While yet his Grace was at Paris with his vic-

torious army, and before he and the Prussian Hero Blucher had received in England the applause earned in their well-fought fields, Lord St. Vincent, though personally known to neither, of his own accord transmitted to both the great soldiers his pledge of admiration. The little notes which passed should relate the incident.

TO THE DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON.

"Rochetts, 22nd February, 1816.

"MADAM,

"I had left, by a codicil to my will, a good por-
"trait of my excellent friend the late Lord Long-
"ford, to the Earl, his son; but recollecting that
"Lady Longford had a copy made from it, which I
"conclude is possessed by his Lordship, I beg leave
"to present your Grace with the original.

"I also had given, by codicil, a portrait of Mar-
"shal Saxe to the Duke of Wellington, as the only
"tribute in my power to pay to his illustrious deeds,
"which I hope he will do me the honour to accept;
"and, when permission is obtained, both portraits
"shall be sent to Hamilton Street.

"I have the honour to be, with the highest re-
"spect, your Grace's most obedient humble servant,

"ST. VINCENT."

FROM THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Paris, February 22nd, 1816.

"MY LORD,

"The Duchess of Wellington has informed me
"of your Lordship's kindness in presenting me with

" the portrait of Marshal Saxe. I beg your Lord-
" ship to accept my best acknowledgments, more
" particularly for the motive which induced you to
" send me this portrait. I assure your Lordship
" that I am most fully sensible of the value of the
" approbation of one whose own great deeds prove
" that he must be a judge of the merit of others.

" I have the honour to be, my Lord, with the
" utmost respect, your Lordship's most obedient and
" faithful humble servant, " WELLINGTON."

" To Earl St. Vincent."

TO FIELD-MARSHAL PRINCE BLUCHER, ETC., ETC.

" Rochetts, 2nd February, 1816.

" SIR,

" An old British seaman, anxious to express
" his admiration of the glorious achievements per-
" formed by your Highness and the brave troops
" under your command, begs permission to present
" your Highness with a portrait of the great Fre-
" derick, upon whose school you have reflected so
" much honour.

" Allow me to assure your Highness of the high
" respect and esteem with which I have the honour
" to be, Sir, your Highness's most obedient humble
" servant, " ST. VINCENT."

FROM FIELD-MARSHAL PRINCE BLUCHER.

" Breslau, 1 Mai, 1816.

" MONSIEUR,

" Le souvenir que votre Excellence a bien
" voulu me destiner par le tableau du grand Frédéric

" m'est autant plus cher qu'il vient des mains d'un " héros qui illustre cette Marine qui sera à jamais la " gloire de l'inébranlable Angleterre.

" Recevez les remercimens d'un vieux camarade " qui se dira à jamais avec estime sincère et haute " considération,

" De votre Excellence,

" Le très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur

" et ami, " BLUCHER."

All the leading incidents in Lord St. Vincent's career have not been related as regularly as could have been wished. It has been omitted to say that in 1809 his Lordship's old Lisbon friend, Don Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho, then Ambassador at London from the King of Portugal, informed him that he was created a Knight Grand Cross of the Portuguese Order of the Tower and Sword; and that in 1814 his Lordship was apprized that he was appointed a General of the Marines, upon which occasion Lord St. Vincent took another opportunity of testifying his sense " of the justice which Lord Melville did to the services of Sea Officers." But the great object of Lord St. Vincent's ambition, indeed the only honour or reward for which he ever expressed a wish, which was only heard in private, was the Garter. He cherished a hope of it to the day of his death, frequently observing " that, when so many were worn by the soldiers, " the sailors should at least have one; that surely " England's naval merit must be equal to that; and " that the Navy should never be without one;" and

upon every vacancy after the death of Lord Howe, he flattered himself that his zeal and services would be thought worthy that honourable distinction. But, with shame it is written, he flattered himself in vain!

Now as George the Fourth was always very sincerely attached to Lord St. Vincent, when Prince of Wales appointed him one of his Council, and in after life always used to call him "his Old Oak," it is impossible to attribute this exclusion of the veteran Hero from his rightful distinction, to anything but to the baneful effect and blighting influence of Party-feeling. The Sea Officer, Sir John Jervis, had in battle saved his Country;—but the Whig Statesman, Lord St. Vincent, had been the reforming patriotic Minister; he had exposed abuse; he had planned the Commission of Naval Inquiry.

To this unjust and odiously vindictive proscription by Party, it surely must have also been owing, that England's great Admiral never once was invited to the distinguished circle who received the Emperors of Russia and Austria and the King of Prussia, when they and their chosen heroes were England's guests! A great and a grave omission; a slight on the whole Navy; and an injustice to the Nation. An omission which certainly ought not to have occurred; and which produced such forcible effect on the Emperor Alexander, that, when Lord St. Vincent was not to be seen at even the Naval Review, the Emperor asked* the Prince Regent "if Lord St. Vincent *were dead?*" On all this, it were well

* The late Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt heard and communicated this to the author's Father; the letter is in existence.

to withhold the remarks which deep indignation prompts.

When the Prince Regent increased the Order of the Bath, and created Knights Grand Crosses, Lord St. Vincent in his own energetic language said, "that he did not care whose name they had placed "on the list, if they had only done him the favour "to strike his out; that when he was created a "K. B. it was an honourable distinction, but that "now he saw names on the list which he thought "disgraced it, and all classed with them." * In reply to the first letter he received from his Secretary, addressing his Lordship as G.C.B., Lord St. Vincent returned the envelope, having written upon it, "Why persecutest thou me with G.C.B.? "letters of annoyance and degradation!" Nor for many subsequent years would he wear any but the old star; indeed, he never changed it at all for the new one, until an especial occasion of paying his duty to Majesty.

In 1818, decay in Lord St. Vincent's constitutional health was making approaches distressingly perceptible. The cough, which ever since his first command of the Channel Fleet used, with but short intervals, to continually torment him, was now so frequent and convulsive, violently shaking his whole

* The Duke of Wellington seems to have been dissatisfied with the selection made from the Army too for the Grand Crosses: "I could have stated reasons why it should not have been conferred on some, and why it should have been conferred on "others," was his Grace's letter to the Duke of York.—GURWOOD, xii. p. 224.

frame, as to be quite terrible to even those who beheld it; and, the effects which it ultimately produced being already apprehended, his Lordship was advised to winter in a milder climate. Captain Edward and Miss Brenton, and a medical attendant, became his companions in an excursion to the South of France.

The localities which were visited had to Lord St. Vincent peculiarly attractive charms. Marseilles, where some were found who could well recollect the stranded Alarm, and who instantly hailed the features of her efficient Captain. The Isles of Hyères, from whose waters Captain Macnamara, in the Southampton, dashed his Commander-in-chief's "eye-sore" away. Toulon, which he had holden in such rigorous blockade, checking the commencement of Napoleon's career; and where the noble Troubridge used to lead the videttes Hood and Hallowell, the choicest among Captains, up to the very guns of the forts. The Mediterranean, where from his command the British Navy dates its discipline, where he found Nelson, and in what obscurity! and formed him, and for what an immortality! from whence how gloomily he retreated, to return how grandly from victory and from mutiny! Then there was a Dock-yard, where, haply, France might exhibit a well-regulated economy, which England would do well to imitate; or where she might be the victim of, mutinous shipwrights, jobbing contractors, or negligent boards; to be defeated or exposed by some intrepid minister, thus leading the way to practical reform; and whose glory it was also

to be, that his honest, faithful services to his Country should be traduced by those who profited by the public need, or had been convicted of supineness and sloth, or were fearful or jealous of the Reformer's fame. Can we wonder that on the rush of such imaginations through his Lordship's enviable thoughts, the fire of energetic character beamed through the overcast of infirmity and decrepitude? or that the old Admiral's silent musings over the waters of that ocean felt

> " — the gales that from you blow
> A momentary bliss bestow?"

When it became known at Paris that the vicinity of a Royal Port was visited by Lord St. Vincent, the Government of France transmitted orders, that, should his Lordship enter the Arsenal, he should be received with such honours and hospitality as only a generous and mighty nation would show to the veteran warrior of a rival kingdom. To the credit of the gallant and very distinguished Admiral Missiessy, who received his Lordship, be it said, that in his address he called Lord St. Vincent " as much " the father of the French as of the English Navy."* Officers and civilians, sailors and soldiers, townsfolk and peasantry, crowded around him to gratify curiosity. As may be anticipated, it was Lord St. Vincent's particular request that all the parade compliments and formalities of salutes and guards should be omitted. When he walked through the Arsenal,

* These words are extracted from Lord St. Vincent's letter describing the reception.

every one's observation noticed with what tact his dexterous questions searched the economy, and probed the resources of the Dock-yard, or ascertained the improvements which France had made in the equipment of Her Fleet; it was not less admired, with what perfect ease and courtesy he received and returned all the numberless little attentions for which the politeness of the French Nation is so proverbial.

Lord St. Vincent continued his residence at Hyères until the spring of 1819. His health and spirits made a short-lived rally during the excursion; but, soon after his return to England, it was too manifest that the days of his life were shortening. Indeed, he seems himself to have been sensible that his latter end was gaining fast upon him; for, while walking in the grounds at Rochetts, to his bailiff's suggestion that some venerable old oak should be felled, because it was rapidly withering but still retained a value, "I command you to do no such thing," said his Lordship; "that tree and I have been long contemporaries; we have flourished together, and together we will fall."

In 1820 old age and debility compelled Lord St. Vincent to inform the Lord Chancellor that he was wholly unable to attend in his place in the House of Peers during the trial of Queen Caroline; and to him it was a very great disappointment not to have been a spectator of that fierce encounter of forensic skill and eloquence; but "I burn," he wrote, "with "indignation, that the Country is disgraced before "Europe by such an oppressive, and shameful, and

"scandalous proceeding; of which our history must "perpetuate the infamy." — "Lord Grey's conduct "throughout has been great and noble beyond the "reach of my praise."

In 1821 his Lordship was raised to the rank of an Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Melville's letter stating that there was no impediment to the Board of Admiralty conferring the rank on more than one Flag-officer; and shortly afterwards the King honoured Lord St. Vincent by information that His Majesty presented him with a naval bâton, corresponding to that of a Field Marshal in the Army. The communication was:

"Pavilion, 5th December, 1821.

"SIR BENJAMIN BLOOMFIELD is honoured with "the King's commands to convey to Earl St. Vin- "cent the expression of His Majesty's warmest re- "gards, and to present to his Lordship, in His "Majesty's name, the accompanying 'Bâton,' as a "testimony of His Majesty's personal esteem, and of "the high sense His Majesty entertains of the emi- "nent services which his Lordship has rendered to "his Country by his distinguished talents and bril- "liant achievements."

The bâton itself was conveyed by a deputation of Lords of the Admiralty.

About five o'clock in the morning of the 10th of August, 1822, four old Pensioners, in their best clothes, were observed to go to the Terrace fronting Greenwich Hospital. Their arrival one by one, and

their avoiding and their manner of eyeing each other, indicated that they did not go there by concert, and that each wished the rest should not interfere with him. Each had the same object, the delight of meeting his old Admiral. By each his early habits were well known; for each, when at the wheel, had often and often witnessed the Commander-in-chief's constant practice of meeting the Morning star. One saw him walk the Quarter-deck so far back as the dawn of the 14th February, 1797! Two were old Victory's, the others old Ville de Paris'. They all had heard that "My "Lord was to sleep last night at the Governor's," and they all knew that their best, if not their only, chance of the unexpected pleasure of another look upon him, was to be up and out, while others were still asleep. They all were repaid. On that morning, the King, having embarked for an excursion to Scotland, was to honour Lord St. Vincent with a reception on his own element. For this purpose his Lordship reposed the preceding night at the house of Sir Richard Keats, the Governor of the Hospital; and long before six in the morning he was seen on the Terrace, with his four old shipmates walking to leeward of him.* It was noticed, with a sigh, how still suited to each other was the pace of the infirm step of all; but then that, from the countenance of all, their former spirit beamed forth, as they suddenly stopped; and when, planting his stick firmly before

* These little incidents were communicated to the Author's Father by Sir Richard Keats, and the late Lieutenant Taylor, of Greenwich Hospital.

him, Lord St. Vincent either spoke very earnestly, or listened with great attention or amusement to what his companions said. The interview was all the Pensioners wanted; in such happiness an hour soon slipped away; nor did either enjoy more pleasure than he conferred; and on his return Lord St. Vincent appeared in more than usual spirits, related the interview, and said, "We all in our "day were smart fellows."

From that morning's early walk some idea may be formed of the activity of mind which still animated the aged frame, then in its eighty-eighth year. It also may be seen in the following note, which on the preceding day Lord St. Vincent had written to his nephew:—

"Rochetts, August 9. Friday.

"DEAR EDWARD,

"I sleep at the Government house at Greenwich "Hospital to-night; pay my respects to His Ma- "jesty at eight o'clock to-morrow morning on board "the Royal George, and go to town immediately "afterwards; pass the remainder of the day and "the night in Brook Street; and hope to dine "at Rochetts on Sunday.

"Yours most affectionately,

"ST. VINCENT."

It was observed that on that morning Lord St. Vincent, for the first time, wore on his breast the star which now decorates Knights Grand Crosses of the Bath: he had ever before clung to the old order.

The interview with Majesty was long and gracious; it also was the last time that Lord St. Vincent ever was upon the water; and the last Naval Officer who had, on duty, the honour of attending him, was the present Captain M'Clintock, whose arm assisted his Lordship's tottering step on shore from the boat: and then taking off his hat to the youthful Midshipman, "Thank ye, Sir; thank ye;" said the old Admiral, in his last Adieu to the Naval Service.

There now only remains, to shortly revert to the leading Continental occurrences of the previous year, for the grief of proceeding to Lord St. Vincent's last earthly scene.

That in 1821 the army which the King of Spain had assembled, in the childish project of reconquering America, proclaimed liberty, and restored the lawful constitution of 1812; that the Holy Allianced powers of the North abhorred and denounced such noble conduct; and that in 1822 Louis XVIII. of France, and his ultra Royalist bigots, alarmed at the vicinity of Constitutional freedom, deluged Spain with a large army, which, on the absurd and wickedly false pretence of a *cordon sanitaire* against the yellow fever, they had drawn around Her; and that, as well by the French nation as in England, such an atrocious effort to establish absolute monarchy was publicly condemned, both in the senate, and by unequivocal demonstration of popular opinion, are facts well remembered: also, that in 1823 M. Manuel conspicuously shone in the French Chamber of Deputies on the

side of Liberty, and that he thereby incurred the displeasure of the fanatical administration he opposed.

But, while these events were thus transpiring, Lord St. Vincent's once robust frame was approaching its last functions. Old age, debility, and convulsive fits of coughing, had all but worn it out. This was in the month of March.

Dr. Baird was in almost daily attendance. Mr. Tucker was already there, paying his duty to his benefactor; and it appears from his memoranda, that on the 11th of March his Lordship had, with his Secretary, what Lord St. Vincent used to call "a good long clack" on the sofa; in the course of which Mr. Tucker had gone over many interesting circumstances and anecdotes of his Lordship's career, and had made him laugh heartily by bringing some ludicrous things to his remembrance. That also, among other remarks, Lord St. Vincent said, "that it had often been a matter of satisfaction "to him, that Buonaparte saw such specimens of "our Naval Officers as Sir Henry Hotham, Sir "George Cockburn, and Sir Frederick Maitland;" and that when reminded that they all arose from his own school,—"No," he replied; "that is too much. "They would have been as great anywhere: it "was *with* such men that I formed a school." He expressed "indignation that Sir James Saumarez had not yet been made a Peer;"* adding that,

* It was one of the first acts of Lord Grey, as Premier, to do justice to this great Sea-officer, and in a manner which marked his Lordship's high opinion of the brilliant services rewarded.

"great and glorious as has been his public career, "the virtues of his private life eclipse it." He laughed heartily about the lecture he gave to Captain Darby of the Bellerophon at Gibraltar, and at the "pusillanimity of some of his Cabinet "colleagues at the mutiny of the shipwrights, and "their dread of invasion by France, which," he said, "the French were a great deal too wise to at-"tempt; though certainly they might play upon "our public credit by assuming a menacing atti-"tude." He said that one of his colleagues, mentioning his name, "'spaniel'd him at heels'* "from Downing Street to the Admiralty, in the "vain hope of inducing him to '*relent*' from the "Commission of Naval Enquiry." He remarked, what indeed he had before frequently written and said, "That the French, from the era of Louis "XIV. have always equipped their fleet sooner "than we have. That their *Bureau de Classe* "continues in full vigour; and that without a large "body of Marines we shall be long, very long, "before an efficient fleet can be gotten for sea." Upon the Secretary's observing what a firm friend his Lordship had ever been to the Marines, "No, "Sir," Lord St. Vincent emphatically replied: "in "obtaining for them the distinction of Royal, I "but inefficiently did my duty. I never knew "an appeal to them for honour, courage, or loyalty, "that they did not more than realize my highest "expectations. If ever the hour of real danger "should come to England, they will be found the

* Quoting Shakspeare—Antony and Cleopatra.

"Country's sheet-anchor!" In short, his Lordship, though shaken almost to pieces by his cough, yet certainly passed as pleasant a morning as his illness and all but exhausted strength would permit.

In the evening, the party played the usual rubber at Casino for two-pence a game. Lord St. Vincent had Miss Brenton for a partner, and lost almost every rubber. The lady was not best pleased at such ill luck, and that so tickled his Lordship, that he would play another rubber; but it was with no better fortune, and then he retired in quite a laughing humour.

Whether from the excitement of what he had talked over in the day, or of the merry rubber, his Lordship passed a very restless night, tumbled about a great deal, and rubbed off his nightcap; by which he caught a cold, increased his cough a good deal, and his eyes became much inflamed. Nothing, however, was thought of it, and Dr. Baird and the Secretary returned to town. But in the night Lord St. Vincent suddenly became very much worse: in the morning many of his Lordship's relations and friends were summoned; among those in the House was Captain Palmer, who had married his Lordship's niece; and on the 13th the Captain thus addressed his wife:—

"Rochetts, March 13, 1823.

"YOUR noble and most excellent Uncle sinks, "I fear; but it is gradually. His power of expec- "torating is much weakened, and the phlegm dis- "tresses him much; so that the machine may stop,

" I suppose, at any time, from suffocation; though " at present he is calm and quite himself. He may " perhaps rally, but I think Baird has very little " expectation.

" Surely no man ever reached a greater pinnacle " of greatness, if we measure him by his positive " merit; nor will any character upon the page of " history stand the test of examination better. He " has been told, Sir George Grey is here; and " we know enough of his heart to be certain that " this voluntary proof of the affection of Sir George " must be most gratifying to him."

On the same afternoon Dr. Baird and Mr. Tucker returned. They found that, after passing a still more restless night, his Lordship was gone to his bed, and was in the most alarming state. But even now, while he lay in intensest sufferings, and while the hand of Death was all but on him, still quite alive to all the passing events of the day, the ardour which he exhibited for freedom was as strong as ever. He positively *would be* informed of all that was going on in Greece. His zeal in the cause of the liberty of Spain seemed increased. The Newspapers, as usual, were all read to him. It was perfectly evident that he listened to every sentence with undiminished attention. At the conclusion of M. Manuel's speech, he said he was " a fine manly fellow;" afterwards that the French Gen-d'armes who refused to execute the " outrageously illegal order " to arrest that dauntless Deputy " had behaved like a noble fellow." His Lordship then dozed a

little; when he awoke he said, "What a convulsed "state the World is in!" He then enquired "where the Duke of Lorenzo,"—who, it will be remembered, was sent to England to represent the Constitutional Government,—"was lodged?" and when told, at the Spanish Ambassador's, and that the British populace had testified their good wishes for the Spanish cause, by marks of respect to the former, and of a contrary feeling to the latter; it caused him for a moment to forget his pain and his sufferings, and his countenance brightened up for the last time. The radiance was but transient; yet it was enough to show what a soul he had for freedom, and that his mighty spirit was only setting, but was not enfeebled. After that, he lay in silent exhaustion for two hours, during which time the bystanders of his bed were, his old Captain Sir George Grey, the affectionate Dr. Baird, and the heart-broken Secretary; the witnesses of his greatest energies; the objects of his uninterrupted countenance and kindness. About half-past eight, his extremities were noticed to have become cold and clammy; exertion in breathing then gradually increased to a labour beyond his strength; and, at last, without a sigh or groan, but with merely an effort similar to a suppressed sneeze, he expired.

Lord St. Vincent's remains were interred at Stone in Staffordshire, quite privately, his will so directing. A codicil to that document, in his own handwriting, is—

"As I have endeavoured to live without osten-

"tation, it is my anxious desire that no display of "pomp should appear at, or after, the interment "of my body.

"I therefore direct, that one mourning-coach "only shall accompany the hearse which conveys "my corpse, from the place where it may please "God I shall depart this life, to Stone in Stafford-"shire; and that no escutcheons, or banners, be "exhibited on the hearse, or in the church, and "that no achievements are placed on my houses in "town or country: in witness whereof," &c. &c.

Lord St. Vincent did not die wealthy. He was succeeded in the Peerage by his nephew, Mr. Edward Jervis Ricketts. But his Lordship inherits the Viscounty only. The Earldom ought to be restored; as the remains of the Earl himself ought to have been deposited publicly by the side of those of Lord Nelson.

It has been attempted in the preceding pages, which offer but a general review of Lord St. Vincent's life, to describe the principal shades of his character, as each was drawn forth by the successive occurrences of his times. To recapitulate the same inferences would only be a tautology, the less permissible, because of the beautiful sketch of the individual which the master-pencil* has already outlined. But, if the successful warrior, yet the advocate of peace and of liberty; if the safeguard of Royalty, yet the intrepid monitor of his King; if Military greatness, shedding over a Nation

* Lord Brougham's.

safety in the hour of danger, and glory which can never fade; and Civil greatness, working benefits to endure for generations, all combined in one character, and bright in a panoply of rectitude, can leave a claim to posthumous honours, then does the memory of Lord St. Vincent demand them; and they are due for the sake of example to his Country.

It does not escape attention, that a monument has been erected in St. Paul's Cathedral; nor is the very handsome speech of Lord Ripon, when in the lower House, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he moved the necessary grant, forgotten. The Peroration, itself as just as eloquent, was—

"No man ever commanded a fleet in better style "than Lord St. Vincent; no man ever displayed "better judgment in the selection of his Officers; "no man better knew how to enforce discipline; "no man ever displayed greater promptitude in "action, or made a better use of the means placed "at his disposal, than that eminent individual. "He" (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) "was not "saying too much, when he declared that Earl St. "Vincent ranked with the greatest of those illus- "trious characters to whom the Country is indebted "for its glory and renown."*

To that appeal the House of Commons responded, as for the Navy it ever will respond, liberally. But, of the statue erected, the sculpture is a wretched specimen of national art. The design worse commemorates the man; and were it not for the

* Parliamentary Debates, March, 1823.

words " St. Vincent," which appear beneath them, the resemblance in the features is so positively none, that even from the heart where the warmest affection for the departed dwells, they would not draw " the passing tribute of a sigh."

Noble monuments perpetuate Lord St. Vincent:—Economical Reform in the State, and the Discipline of the British Navy.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 25th March, 1807.

DEAR TUCKER,

I have received the handsomest letter in the world from Mr. Grenville, which, with many other marks of his confidence and regard, will never be erased from my mind.

The Commander's commission is filled up with the name of Ramage, whom I found in the Hibernia, and he has (in the language of Captain Saumarez to Commodore Anson) " literally forced himself into my esteem ;" for I never saw him before, nor had he been mentioned to me by any one. I shall be abused for not promoting by Sir Robert Calder, but he has not the tithe of Mr. Ramage's merit.

I am quite satisfied with what you relate touching communications: and you may assure Mr. Grenville that not even a Blue ribbon, which I ambition, nor any consideration on earth, shall tempt me to act with the coming-in Ministers in *any* employment, military or civil. I thank you for entering my proxy, as I would not for the world be left out from giving support to a measure on which I am sure the promotion of all that is dear to us depends; * I am

* Roman Catholic Emancipation. It is evident that this letter is inadvertently misplaced; but Lord St. Vincent's manner of

sorry to learn from such pre-eminent authority as that of Rear-Admiral Keats that there is already decadence in the discipline of the fleet; which I suspected would, in time, take place, from the reins being let go.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 8th March, 1808.

DEAR TUCKER,

I am so unreasonable as to feel disappointment whenever I don't hear from you; such is the effect of habit.

I hope the squadron about to be sent to the assistance of the King of Sweden will have to co-operate in the Gulf of Finland and Bothnia, and not in the Sound, where credit is more likely to be lost than gained; and my three friends, Saumarez, Hood, and Keats, are characters who ought not to be made scape-goats to my Lord and to Sir . Whatever my opinions may be upon the subject of thanks and pensions, it does not become me, in the character of a Sea Officer, to give utterance to them; but certain it is, that a Peerage without means to support the rank is a punishment. Nothing shows the decline of a Country more than a prostitution of honours and rewards; and we shall be soon as bad as Portugal was, if we go on at this rate.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 1st June, 1808.

DEAR TUCKER,

I have a doleful letter from Lord Collingwood, who says his heart is almost broken by the escape of the French

promoting the friendless well-deserving Officer seemed far too important to be omitted.

squadrons; he complains of the want of intelligence; that which he obtains from the shore false; and so little commerce carrying on, he picks up little or none by means of his cruizers. I enjoy the impotent envy, hatred, and malice of the public Offices connected with the Navy, more than I can express;—the viper biting the file is their emblem.

It is a little extraordinary that the stand I made against giving up the search for British subjects serving in American merchant-ships should have come before the public in the manner it has, for I have never mentioned it to any one; and now, the less my friends say upon the subject the better, that my quondam colleagues may not suspect I am puffing myself off.

The achievement of La Virginie was neatly done. Nothing, in my judgment, is so creditable to an English Sea Officer, as the capture of an enemy's ship with little carnage in his own. Your firm friend, ST. VINCENT.

FROM THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Cleveland Square, July 4th, 1808.

MY DEAR LORD,

Will you forgive me for taking the liberty of enclosing to you a warrant for some forest venison; it is gratifying to me to take any opportunity of expressing to you the interest that I sincerely feel in your health, and the recollections that I retain of the obligations which I owed to you in the public service; and it is impossible for me to see what is passing on the coasts of Spain, without the most anxious regrets that your flag should not now be in that quarter the signal of confidence and victory. Believe me, my dear Lord, with very real truth and regard, most sincerely and faithfully yours, THOMAS GRENVILLE.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Rochetts, 6th July, 1808.

MY DEAR SIR,

Accept my best thanks for a fresh mark of your obliging attention. Such is my attachment to the people of Spain, that, had you been at the head of the Admiralty, I would, regardless of the precarious state of my health, most willingly have engaged in their cause. I never found myself more at ease than while serving under your auspices; and I beg you will be assured that I am, with the truest regard and esteem,

Most faithfully yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO (it is believed) COLONEL HARDINGE.

Rochetts, 3rd September, 1808.

MY DEAR SIR,

I participate sincerely in your grief and regret for the loss of your gallant young friend and mine, who has left us in the midst of his glorious career.

I consider the enterprise and conflict in which he fell, taking in all the circumstances of it, as the most eminently distinguished that our naval annals can boast; and I read a short account of the departed Hero in yesterday's "Courier" with a melancholy sense of pleasure.

It can be truly said of him that he died, as he lived, an ornament to his Country, and an honour to those who bear his name. I cannot abstain from a tear over him;* a weak-

* There then *can be* more than *one* excuse to a British Seaman for tears. The "bier" may be "graced" with "friendship's manly tear."

This beautiful letter was written on the death of Captain George Hardinge, of the Fiorenzo, who fell at the moment the enemy, Piedmontese, 50, struck her colours.

ness (for such it is) which I am not ashamed of confessing to you, whose feelings resemble those of

Your affectionate ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 19th September, 1808.

DEAR TUCKER,

The Gazette* put me into a raging fever yesterday, and my blood is not yet gotten into its usual current. It is pretty evident, from the manner in which Junot worded his articles, that he was very short of provisions; and Sir Charles Cotton's Amendment of the 7th Article is not worth a louse; for, as the Russians are to be conveyed to Russia at our expense, it had been much better to let them go in their own ships, which are of no value. The reasoning in the newspapers upon every part of the transaction appears to me to be more apposite than I ever remember on any public question, and I hope they will not cease to cry "Mortimer" until the royal displeasure is promulgated.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 27th September, 1808.

DEAR TUCKER,

I transcribe an extract from William Parker's letter off the Lizard, which I think should be inserted in a newspaper; it is the more genuine, because William could not be acquainted with the general feeling here when he wrote:

"The particulars of the Convention between Sir H.

* Announcing the Convention of Cintra.

"Dalrymple and Junot reached Corunna two days before "our departure, and were received with the most marked "disappointment by the Spaniards, who inveighed bitterly "against terms so contrary to the expected result of a "campaign, in which the unconditional surrender of all "the French forces in Portugal were thought inevitable; "and the ferment was so great, that I fear the unfavour- "able impression will soon be disseminated throughout the "Spanish armies, which will neither enhance the opinion "of our countrymen in the opinion of our new allies, nor "tend to promote the general cause."

Bowen's * statement of the superior advantage of a secure port among the Scilly Islands for assembling convoys from Ireland, Scotland, Liverpool, and Bristol, over Falmouth, or any other part of the United Kingdom, is a great point gained; and if you wish, I will make a statement of it for public use. Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS. RICKETTS.

Rochetts, 17th June, 1809.

MY DEAR SISTER,

You are so much delighted with the effusions of a grateful heart, that I cannot resist enclosing a letter from my old schoolfellow, Dick Meux.

Mr. Shepherd was his right hand man in the old Brew-house, and has lately quitted it and joined his former em-ployer in a new one; he has two sons in the Navy, who have received promotion, the oldest to the rank of Commander, now serving in the Beagle sloop, in Jamaica; the youngest recently made a Lieutenant by Sir James Saumarez, in the Baltic, by my influence. Dispose of the letter as you please, it having already performed much more than was required, for I had desired Meux not to make any acknowledgment

* Admiral Bowen, formerly Lord Howe's intrepid Master of his flag-ship on the 1st of June.

when I sent him Sir James Saumarez's letter announcing the promotion of the younger Shepherd, he having poured forth a profusion of thanks in a post or two before, upon the perusal of a very civil letter from Admiral Rowley to me, importing that he had sent the Beagle to cruize on the very best station in his command.

Yours affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS. RICKETTS.

Mortimer Street, 18th April, 1809.

MY DEAR SISTER,

Have you read the latter part of the correspondence between Sir J. Moore and Mr. Freere? It has put me into a raging fever, and I cannot sufficiently express my horror at the wicked conduct of Ministers and Officers, in so long permitting the character of that great General and honest man to be calumniated.

Yours affectionately, ST. VINCENT.

TO MRS. RICKETTS.

Mortimer Street, 26th Oct., 1809.

MY DEAR SISTER,

The great jollification at Merchant Tailors' Hall yesterday, exhibited a very remarkable scene. Lord Erskine and myself were the first persons who entered the Council Room; his Lordship was in my carriage. Neither Mr. Beeston Long nor any of the Committee made their appearance for ten minutes after our arrival, owing to my coachman having driven rapidly to get a-head of the innumerable carriages steering the same course. By this accidental circumstance we received the most unbounded incense from the wealth of the City and banking-houses at this end of the town, and half an hour at least passed before any of His Majesty's Ministers appeared. Lord

came first, with a face like an ill dried clout, and the others dropped in, more like a dispersed convoy than a united band. Mr. Percival, Lords Camden, Hawkesbury, Westmoreland, Mr. Canning, Lord Granville Leveson, Mr. Ryder, the Judge Advocate, Mr. Rose, Charles Long, Mr. Hammond, Mr. Bagot, Sir T. Thompson, Comptroller of the Navy, &c. Lord Harrowby did not appear, and Lord Castlereagh pretended a headache. By the ill-judged measure of dressing the dinner in the kitchen of the Hall, we did not sit down until after seven o'clock; the name of each person, to the number of three hundred and fifty, was upon his plate, and Mr. Beeston Long showed critical judgment in placing his guests. On each side of him, sat those of the Cabinet who have not actually resigned; Lord Mulgrave was the furthest removed from him on the left, and next to his Lordship sat Sheridan, who has long been on intimate habits with the Phippses. Then came Mr. Thomas Baring, my Lordship next to him, and then Lord Erskine, opposite to us. On the lower side, were placed Mr. Bagot, Canning, Huskisson, (Manning, the West India Merchant,) Ryder, Lord Granville Leveson, and the Comptroller of the Navy, the only person in that lower line that does not attach to Canning. We had bad music, but tolerable singing, the *Non Nobis* finely performed. Mr. Long gave us an *eloge* upon the moral virtues of His Majesty, and the happiness of his subjects, and merits a baronetage. I went away early, I believe the first, and an universal plaudit followed me down that noble room, and re-echoed until I was out of hearing. All the Ministers and Runners paid court to me, in almost a nauseous manner, excepting Mr. Percival, who looked the character Mrs. Clarke gave him in the House of Commons, a little, dirty, lawyer-like, looking man. For the rest I must refer you to the newspapers, being about to step into the carriage, for Rochetts.—Give my kind love to the girls, and rest assured of the unalterable affection of

ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 16th Dec., 1809.

DEAR TUCKER,

I cannot resist writing three lines by Fowles, to express the joy and gratification I feel in the success of Lord Grenville, and I beg you will give my compliments of congratulation to Mr. Thomas Grenville upon it.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 20th February, 1812.

DEAR TUCKER,

I am under great difficulty touching my proxy, owing to the want of information, whether Lord Moira has been apprized of the desire I had to lodge it with him, which Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt promised to give me by Thursday night's post. My determination is, as it ever has been, to give every support in my power to the Catholic claims; at the same time, I do not feel disposed to enter into all the bitterness arising from the disappointment of the Opposition.

With Mr. Percival I will have nothing to do.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, August, 1812.

DEAR TUCKER,

I cannot, for the soul of me, understand the policy of reducing the number of shipwrights in the King's Yards, and making contracts to build frigates, with the materials piled in these very Yards, furnished to the contractors at a

price below what was paid for them to other contractors! This is a mystery beyond my comprehension. How we are to stagger under the profusion existing in every department, I am at a loss to guess; with the approaching subsidies and increased expenses of a war with the United States, which will be much more serious than people seem to be aware of. For we have drawn heavily upon Canada and Nova Scotia, to reinforce the Army in the Peninsula, and have left a force in those provinces very inadequate to the defence of them, while Bermuda has been unaccountably neglected; add to this the arts which will be practised to promote desertion from our ships and troops, and the preservation of our colonies appears to me very problematical, while the expense of providing for those evils at the spur of the moment must be enormous; a fine harvest for speculative adventurers, who abound in those regions.

Warrand's action with the French privateer does him great credit; I am glad he is promoted for it, and likely soon to recover from his chop.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

FROM VICE-ADMIRAL SIR JAMES SAUMAREZ.

17, Cork Street, June 7th, 1814.

MY DEAR LORD,

In consequence of Sir Edward Pellew having been created a Peer, I immediately waited upon Lord Melville, and stated to him, that as Sir Edward Pellew had this mark of distinction conferred upon him for his services, I trusted he would take mine into consideration, and recommend me for the same honour. Lord Melville informed me that he had signified to the Earl of Liverpool that in the event of a further extent of the Peerage to Military Officers, he would consider it his duty to recommend me for the same distinction. After three weeks had elapsed,

finding there was no intention to create more Peers, I waited upon Lord Liverpool, to request that he would lay my services before the Prince Regent, which he has promised to do; and as those services were in great part under the auspices of your Lordship when Commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, and also as First Lord of the Admiralty, I hope you will do me the honour to state them to His Royal Highness.

Your Lordship will judge of my feelings at finding an Officer, junior to me, advanced to the Peerage, and my long and zealous services entirely neglected upon this occasion.

I should have been most happy to have paid my respects to your Lordship at Rochetts, but was fearful of being intrusive. I have the honour to be, with the highest regard and consideration, my dear Lord, your faithful and most obedient servant, JAMES SAUMAREZ.

(Reply.)

TO VICE-ADMIRAL SIR JAMES SAUMAREZ.

Rochetts, June 8th, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR JAMES,

Although I entertain the highest opinion of your merits and services, and am ready to bear testimony to them, in public and private, you will, I am sure, upon reflection, see the impropriety of my engaging in a comparative estimate with those of other Officers.

In any memorial you may judge fit to present, you have full authority to refer to me as Commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, and First Lord of the Admiralty; not that any doubt can exist in the mind of any well informed man of the many distinguished actions in which you have been engaged. Yours sincerely, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 13th June, 1814.

DEAR TUCKER,

The promotion to the Flag, and the increase to half pay have produced a general good effect, and will contribute to the comfort of a prudent man; but I am very much hurt that Captain Peard is passed over; for his merit in facing the mutiny on board the St. George ought never to be forgotten or unrewarded.

I fear the mode of application resorted to by Sir James Saumarez will end ill; but surely, with such a high mind, and unrivalled pretensions, a Peerage is an object beneath him. Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

FROM LORD SIDMOUTH.

Whitehall, May 5th, 1814.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have just had the satisfaction of hearing from Lord Melville that he has taken the Prince Regent's pleasure, and received His Royal Highness' authority to offer to your Lordship the situation of General of Marines, just made vacant by the death of Lord Bridport. Allow me to express an earnest and anxious hope that you will not hesitate to accept this honourable testimony of the Prince Regent's high opinion and favour, which His Royal Highness has been advised to present to your Lordship from the just sense entertained by Lord Melville of what is due to your Lordship's professional rank, services, and character. I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard, my dear Lord, your most obedient faithful servant, SIDMOUTH.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 5th Feb., 1815.

DEAR TUCKER,

I am so much disappointed and disgusted with this "New Era," in every sense of the words, that I am determined to stick to my old friends heart and hand; and as you say Lord Grey will be in town to-morrow, I will send my proxy to him, the moment you enable me to do so.

I hear, from no mean authority, that Lord Castlereagh and Lord Stuart have exposed themselves and their Country to excessive ridicule at Vienna, and by their imbecility, the seeds of a new war on the Continent are sown.—God help us! Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

You may show this letter to Lord Grey, Lord Grenville, and Mr. Thomas Grenville.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 4th Sept., 1815.

DEAR TUCKER,

Our crops of every description have been most abundant, and are all housed except beans, which being in the sheaf for the most part, are not liable to injury. The memory of man does not recollect so prosperous and cheap a harvest! Nevertheless, all the cultivators of land complain most grievously of low prices; and many are failing, for they have been living up to the full extent of their profits; their sons and daughters are getting far above their condition, and instead of working at the churn, cheese-press, and other domestic concerns, are playing upon their *pi-a-nos*, and flaunting about in shawls; while every female in a market cart carries a parasol in a languishing form; but the country-banks, which have in a great part been the cause of these events, are in a tottering state, and will not make

any further advances, so that the foundation of our outward and visible sign of prosperity appears to me very hollow.

I thank you for causing to be known at the Admiralty the interest I feel for Captain Mangin, and rest assured I am, Stedfastly yours, ST. VINCENT.

FROM H. R. H. THE DUKE OF SUSSEX.

Kensington Palace, January 20th, 1816.

MY DEAR LORD,

My much esteemed friend, Miss Knight, informed me that she was going to Rochetts, on the 20th, to join in the celebration of your birthday. The high feelings of personal regard which I entertain for your Lordship, will, I hope, therefore, be my excuse for making her my messenger, and thus intruding upon your time. With expressions of my sincere and fervent wishes for your health and happiness, which must be as interesting as gratifying to those who have the happiness of being most intimate with you, and not less so to other individuals who, upon the score of national gratitude and pride, are sensible of what is due to Earl St. Vincent, for his public and glorious career.

I have the pleasure to remain, my dear Lord, with every sentiment of esteem and gratitude, your truly obliged and devoted, &c. AUGUSTUS FREDERICK.

FROM H. R. H. THE DUKE OF SUSSEX.

Kensington Palace, Feb. 3, 1816.

MY DEAR LORD,

Our excellent friend, Miss Knight, informed me how kind and how anxious you had been about my election as President of the Society for the Promotion of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce; you will, therefore, I trust, excuse my intruding upon your time to express my gratitude for your Lordship's friendly exertions on the occasion.

Through the kindness of my friend my *triumph over the Premier* has been complete. At the same time I do confess my satisfaction has not been small on the occasion; for his Lordship offered himself, knowing that my name had been up three weeks, *and even his vote had been solicited at that period;* a correspondence ensued which likewise proved his knowledge of the circumstance, and consequently marks what was the intention. Could it prognosticate a further decline in public opinion, I should be most happy, for a Minister of England who ventures to establish a Succession by the sword against the general wish of a nation, is not well calculated to inspire confidence as to his constitutional ideas.—When this letter comes to hand I pray that Lady St. Vincent may be better, and your anxiety on that score removed. Believe me, very sincerely, my dear Lord, Your obliged and devoted, &c.

AUGUSTUS FREDERICK.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE NAVAL CLUB.*

At the Crown and Anchor.

Mortimer Street, 8th March, 1816.

SIR,

Believing that I am the oldest Member of the Navy Club, held at the Crown and Anchor, in existence; and having had some share in the formation of it; I did intend to have made my appearance there on Wednesday next, had not a dreadful cough, which never fails to assail me in this town, compelled me to fly into the country. Next to the pleasure of meeting my brother Officers, many of whom I have not the honour to know, I had in view to propose the consolidation of the Naval Society, and to give them a

* It scarcely need be said that this Club was one of only occasional meetings; it bore no resemblance to that of which Lord St. Vincent had expressed disapprobation.

new form and shape commensurate to the exalted character the British Navy has acquired, and maintained. In aid of this, the fund which has accumulated by the number of absentees, arising from the frequent wars and armaments since the first Institution, would be a main pillar; but to obtain this desirable object, every member of the Club resident in Great Britain, Ireland, and on the Continent of Europe, should be written to, and on a given day, in the latter end of May, a meeting of all the members then in London, convened, to take their answers into consideration, and a select Committee of persons most conversant with measures of this kind, appointed to consider of, and give effect to the Plan. It would be presumption in me, who have for some time past lived out of the world, to offer any further opinion upon the subject; one observation, however, I beg leave to make, which is, that unless the expense is brought down, and the annual subscription moderate, many valuable members will, from circumstances, be excluded.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 1st October, 1816.

DEAR TUCKER,

Your ideas of the expedition against Algiers exactly indent with ours here. The imbecility of the policy of destroying that power can only be equalled by the bravery of our ships, which fills me with admiration. From what I can gather of his conduct in the battle, the Captain of the Granicus * surely must have thought Lord Nelson was looking at him! Your fast friend, ST. VINCENT.

* The present Rear-Admiral Wise.

It is delightful to present this continued deference by Lord St. Vincent to Lord Nelson's superiority. When Sir Thomas Trou-

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 12th November, 1816.

DEAR TUCKER,

We hear of nothing but the distresses of the people, who can only be essentially relieved by the reduction of taxes, and especially of the Army and Ordnance expenditure, to the scale on which it stood in the year 1790; and Parliament ought to be assembled immediately to carry this measure into execution; and this language ought to be expressed at every public meeting in the kingdom, for it is by this voice alone we can be relieved from the approaching evil of military despotism.

I am told by others, as well as you, that great attention is shown at the Admiralty to my opinions; but after a life of nearly eighty-two years, I do not give much credit to their hearsays. Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

FROM THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Cleveland Square, 12th December, 1816.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am very much gratified in receiving from you the print, which you have been so good as to send to Cleveland Square. It is a very good resemblance of one for whom I entertain a very unaffected respect and esteem. To the splendour of your naval victories, so deservedly applauded by the whole Country, my testimony is not worth adding; but the opportunity which I had of tracing the effects of your genius in the naval administration, while you presided at the Admiralty, has always convinced me that your cou-

bridge entered the battle gallantly, it was, "As if the eyes of *all England* were upon him;" but now, distinguished bravery is as if *Lord Nelson's* smile of approbation were the reward!

rage, intelligence, and activity, had furnished you with the means, as well as the desire, of doing more important service to the Country, as the head of the Board of Admiralty.

My opinion, insignificent as it is, has never been concealed upon this subject; and I do not fear the imputation of flattery from repeating to you yourself, what, in justice to you, I have always said behind your back.

I have taxed Waltham Forest with a contribution to your Christmas table, though I am afraid the King's deer are not, in these hard times, fatter than his subjects. Believe me always, my dear Lord,

Most truly and faithfully yours, THOMAS GRENVILLE.

TO VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

Rochetts, June 16th, 1817.

MY LORD,

Being prevented from obeying the enclosed summons by old age and infirmities, I feel it an indispensable duty to state to your Lordship, that the office of Auditor to the Naval Asylum is of no use whatever; established by the intrigues and secret influence of the person who fills it, and ought to be put down. And I am of opinion that this Institution should be placed under the controul of the Admiralty. I appeal to Mr. Rose for the correctness of this statement, and I believe Sir Wm. Scott entertains the same sentiments. I have the honour to be, with great respect, your Lordship's most obedient, humble servant,

ST. VINCENT.

TO SIR JAMES SAUMAREZ, BART.

Rochetts, 22d Feb., 1818.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

In reply to your letter of the 18th inst., I affirm that there can be no diversity of opinion touching the merits of your services, which are transcendant.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO VICE-ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE HOPE, BART.

Rochetts, 15th March, 1818.

MY DEAR ADMIRAL,

I am very much concerned to learn that ill health occasions your retreat from the Admiralty; before this event takes place, I feel it an act of justice to a very meritorious Officer, to put you in possession of a flagrant instance of neglect, and inattention, he has received; relying confidently on your decision; for a disclosure might expose him to great injury and oppression, from the acrimony of whose talents might be much more beneficially employed in the routine of his Office, than in political intrigue. I refer you to Admiral Wm. Hope, for the character of Mr. Ramage as an Officer, and to Capt. Hind for his labours as a Nautical Surveyor.

Ever yours, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 15th May, 1818.

DEAR TUCKER,

I am glad to learn, that you have served up the Hospital dish to Sir George Cockburn; for the office of Governor, and two out of three Lieutenants are worse than sinecures, absolute nuisances; but frequent visits from the Inspector, with necessary powers, must be made, or gross abuses will ensue.

Mr. Delhunty is here, and confirms all my statements touching Naval Hospitals, and also, my late apprehensions, that all the systems I established (and vainly hoped would endure for ever) to preserve the health of our Seamen, are wearing out fast; sick berths, where they continue, altered for the worse, and applied, in some instances, to other purposes; it may not be amiss to moot this to Sir George, for

of all the services I lay claim to, the preservation of the health of our Fleets, is my proudest boast; taking care, to keep Delhunty's name out of sight, or the Guardship Surgeons will roast and devour him.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

TO EARL ST. VINCENT.

Kensington, July 4th, 1818.

MR. DICKENSON presents his compliments to Lord St. Vincent, and returns him his heartiest thanks, for the honour he has done him in making application towards forwarding his election; such kindness, when marked, is always truly acceptable, but when coming from a person who has for many years filled the space in this Country that Lord St. Vincent has, it is most highly gratifying.

TO W. DICKENSON, ESQ.

Rochetts, July 8th, 1818.

SIR,

Whatever merit is due for the service I endeavoured to render you, belongs exclusively to Archdeacon Trevelyan, for I had not the honour of being acquainted with you.

Believing that you are governed by sound Whig principles, opposed to enormous standing armies, and that you will exert your utmost abilities to rescue the Navy from the degraded state it is now in (merged in the Army), you will always find a zealous friend in, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Dudbrook, 17th July, 1818.

DEAR TUCKER,

The French, from the era of Louis the XIV., have always equipped their fleet sooner than we have done. The

Bureau de Classe continues in full vigour, and without a large corps of Marines, we shall be long, before an efficient Fleet can be got ready.*

It is of great importance to our Country, that the public should be kept alive upon the subject of our monstrous Army, in a series of letters in the Times Newspaper, showing that the Marine Corps is best adapted to the security of our Dockyards; and that no Soldier, of what is termed the Line, should approach them; our Colonies ought to have no other Infantry to protect them, and the Corps of Marine Artillery should be substituted for the old Artillery. The ordnance and appurtenances for his Majesty's Fleet, should be vested in the Admiralty, and entirely taken away from what is termed the Ordnance Department. The futile employment ycleped *Staff* should be totally done away, and all the frippery of the Army sent to the devil.

Yours ever, ST. VINCENT.

* Can there be a doubt, that if the Marines and Marine Artillery were so far augmented as to wholly garrison some of our Naval Arsenals, with Cork, Malta, Bermuda, and some Eastern foreign fortress, the increase to our Naval strength would be far beyond the proportionate additional expense? On such stations, and on sea service, that gallant corps might go through periodical role of duty, as is arranged for the Army.

Any increase of force is always most palatable to England, when it is to strengthen the Navy. At the breaking out of a war, the admitted great inconvenience of compelling Regiments of the Line to do duty as Marines, would be avoided; while the first ships, far the most important ones, which the first brush of impress would but scantily man, would, by replacing such depots with regiments, be at once secure, as far as for their service of the guns, of perfect complements.

FROM CAPTAIN *

December, 15th.

MY LORD,

Report says that shortly there is to be an additional number of Peers made by the Regent, and several of those in the Navy. Admiral Young is mentioned, and Sir John Duckworth: now, my Lord, I know the interest you have always taken in Sir Richard Strahan, who is, I believe, your Godson; I remember his father and you were great friends as young men. It will be a shameful thing if Strahan is forgot on account of his not having a friend to put the Prince in mind of his services.

It would be useless in me, my Lord, to enumerate to you, who know every body's services better than any body, the numberless acts of gallantry he has performed since ever he went to sea. The merit of his well-fought action after the Battle of Trafalgar, &c., &c.; surely Strahan better deserves a Peerage than either Sir John Duckworth, or Admiral Young; the last of these is quite an old woman, and never has seen any service excepting at the Admiralty Board; Lord Exmouth was made a Peer lately, and Lord Gardner a Viscount; what have they either of them done in comparison to Strahan? Lord Exmouth was never in his life in a line-of-battle-ship action. All these have been done by interest; it is hard, indeed, if the greatest hero we have left (which is yourself, my Lord,) has not interest enough with the Prince to get a Peerage, when it is so well merited, for your own protegé and friend's son, Sir Richard Strahan.

Sir Richard boasts of trying to copy you in your professional career; and hitherto he has certainly succeeded. The only recompense he has ever got is the red ribbon, which, as it is become so common, is of course less va-

* It is manifest from the contents of this and the following letter that inadvertence has caused them to be misplaced.

luable, and inferior to his merits; there have been so many instances lately where people have been rewarded for services long gone by, that surely Strahan has a claim, and a great one too; for his was the last gallant action ever fought by a British Navy.

If Pat Strahan had been in your situation, and a son of yours in Sir Richard's, I am sure your son would have had his warm heart and interest. I am taking a great liberty, my Lord, in addressing you on a subject of which Strahan, as you may imagine from the modesty of his character, is totally ignorant.

I write this in consequence of a conversation I overheard at table, and from my devoted and warm regard for an old friend. I am, my Lord,

Your obedient servant.

(Reply.)

TO CAPTAIN

SIR,

Your letter of the 15th gives the outline of many solid and substantial acts of kindness I have shown to the widow and two sons of my old schoolfellow, Pat Strahan; nor have I been wanting in due praise of the skilful seamanship and manly enterprize of the remaining son to the highest personages; but to offer advice to the Prince Regent, unasked, touching the exercise of the highest privilege of the Throne, would be a most daring act of arrogance and presumption.

Upon the scale you have drawn of the comparative merits of Flag Officers, I make no observation; the respect I entertain for the memory of your father and mother, and regard for you, prompt me to express a wish that you would be more cautious in promulgating such opinions. You are safe in the hands of, Sir,

Your very humble servant, ST. VINCENT.

TO JAMES PERRY, ESQ.

Of the Morning Chronicle.

Rochetts, 15th July, 1818.

SIR,

I am much obliged to you for the judicious remarks you have made to my friend Captain Palmer, but I wish very much that the deplorable state of the Navy should by some means or other be laid before the public. If there is patriotism among our senators, Sandhurst and Weedon Barracks will be pulled down, and the materials sold. The Ordnance Office is an Augean stable; the alarming array of Military despotism disturbs the peace of your admirer and obedient servant, ST. VINCENT.

I will thank you to communicate this to Captain Palmer.

FROM ADMIRAL LORD KEITH.

18th July, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I congratulate you on returning to your repose, and with improved health; I wish I could say the same. I have had plenty of bustle among the different parties, and their various interests do not always accord. I think the Duchess a very well informed, pleasing woman, of good manners, and inclined to do right. Lord Melville is returned; I met him in public. I will not forget Maitland. But they do nothing for me; in truth, I ask *little* and *seldom*; I am happy, perhaps proud, you approve of the Breakwater; at one time it *hung on a hair, and I had the fortune to turn the scale.* I am, with the sincerest [illegible] your Lordship's faithful and obliged KEITH.

TO LORD KEITH.

Rochetts, 19th July, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have esteemed you from the hour you embarked with me in the Gosport; and you have added greatly to that estimation by the share you had in carrying my project of the Breakwater into execution.

God bless you, ST. VINCENT.

FROM THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Dropmore, 19th July, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

There would be more of self-denial in desiring you to save yourself the trouble of acknowledging a bit of dry Waltham venison; but if it is a pleasure to me to see, under your own hand, that you are as well as your friends can wish you to be, why should not I have frankness enough to own it?

I found, by my friend Tucker, that you rendered his valuable information still more effective by the recommendation that you gave it. You got a great name for a foreign naval victory, but, and as I always repeat, you had no justice done to you for your domestic naval victories.

Ever, my dear Lord, most truly and sincerely yours,

THOMAS GRENVILLE.

TO EDWARD JERVIS RICKETTS, ESQ.

Rochetts, 4th August, 1818.

MY DEAR EDWARD,

After I had despatched my letter of yesterday to the post, Mr. Charles Wright, brother to my late neighbour,

Banker Wright and Bursar, of Stonyhurst Cottage, called, and informed me that the Professors who are about to commence their School of Theology at Aston, are not a little discomposed that Mrs. Welde had not observed the usual courtesy towards me; I assured him that this inattention would not in the smallest degree diminish my good intentions towards them. He speaks well of Mr. Hall, the Principal, who has better manners than most of the order of St. Francis, and that the others were inoffensive men; it is therefore desirable that Mr. Bricklow and the tenantry should be apprized of my wish that they should receive all manner of civility from all who are attached to me.

Lord and Lady Petre, the Dowager, and Miss Petre, Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Blount, the Misses Wright, and Towers, and the Palmers, dine with me to-morrow. Should you fall in with any of the Bellamour family, my guests will be better designated. Captain and Mrs. Edward Brenton, who come down to-morrow, will also be of the dinner-party, and make some stay at Rochetts. Miss Brenton joins in every good wish to your whole family, with

Your truly affectionate uncle, ST. VINCENT.

TO REAR-ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD BERRY.

Hyères, 24th March, 1819.

DEAR SIR EDWARD,

Many thanks for your letter of the 14th ultimo, which did not reach me till very lately. I have suffered less from my chronic complaint than for several winters past, and am at this moment free from cough, a relief justly due to this mild climate; but those who seek amusements or dissipation will not find it at Hyères; on this account the numerous invalids who resort to these regions are discontented, and even dispute the merits of the climate, which, in my opinion, cannot be surpassed. I paid a visit to the

Admiral who commands at Toulon, and was received in the most friendly manner, and at my request, without ceremony, he and the intendants accompanied me through the Arsenal, and explained everything in detail. The whole system seemed well arranged, and the building and repairs going on with much method and regularity; the low wages of the artificers astonished me, the shipwrights not exceeding fourteen-pence per diem, and the rate of working them averages eleven hours a-day throughout the year, deducting an hour and a half for their breakfast and dinners; and, as far as I could observe, they are good workmen; add to this, that every shipwright and caulker in France is subject to the Register, and must serve afloat when called upon, and the advantage over our means is obvious; the Bureau de Classe, existing in the same state, established by Colbert, in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth. The timber I saw, chiefly consisting of oak from the forests in Burgundy, and pine from Corsica, was excellent. The latter is of large mutings, and applied to masts, and thick stuff. A first-rate, the Souverain, will be launched during the ensuing summer, and a large frigate next month. We were entertained with great hospitality (for Miss Brenton, Lord Rosehill, Dr. Grey, and the Rev. Mr. Halford were of the party) by Count Missiessy, his amiable Countess and family, and I never passed a more entertaining day.

Miss Brenton and Dr. Grey join in every good wish to Lady Berry and you, with your old shipmate and sincere friend, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Hyères, 9th April, 1819.

DEAR TUCKER,

Since I last wrote, I have visited the Arsenal at Toulon, and found it well arranged and conducted; the timber, preparing for the ships on the stocks, and repairing, of the

very best kind, the oak from forests in Burgundy, and the pine from Corsica; the latter, of incredible mutings, is applied to mast-making as well as planks, and most durable. They complain much of the Riga fir, and, indeed, of all supplies furnished by contracts; and are of opinion that the Russians tap the fir-trees for turpentine, and thereby injure the timber materially. Their ships have not escaped the dry-rot. Nothing could exceed the attention of the Admiral, by whom, and his amiable family, I was, at my particular request, received without ceremony, in the most hospitable manner. More of this when we meet.

I rejoice in the blow-up of Sir Masseh Lopez, both in Cornwall and Devon, heartily hoping that his purse will be well squeezed, which he will feel more than punishing his person.

My guests join in every kind wish to Mrs. Tucker, you, and your whole tribe, with your unalterable friend,

ST. VINCENT.

TO HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ.

Rochetts, June 9, 1820.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks for your very obliging letter; debility will prevent my paying in person the last tribute of respect to Mr. Grattan, but I shall be proud to have my name enrolled in the list of his admirers, and you are at full liberty to use it, in the manner most expressive of the sorrow I feel for the loss of that great and good man.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO EDWARD JERVIS RICKETTS, ESQ.

Rochetts, December 15, 1820.

MY DEAR EDWARD,

Although it is probable that you are well acquainted with the means used to counteract the county meeting, I

think it right to inform you that I have received a Lichfield printed circular to that effect, very ill calculated, in my judgment, to allay the feelings of just indignation created by the vile attempts to describe all those who reprobate the Bill of Pains and Penalties as traitors.

My guests, who are in good health and spirits, desire to be kindly remembered to Mrs. E. Ricketts, your Maria, and the whole colony, and I am,

The affectionate uncle of all, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 18th March, 1822.

DEAR TUCKER,

About the rumoured division of the duties of the Medical Board at Somerset House, I abstain to remark till I have talked with Baird, and seen more details; except that if the surgical part of them is not placed under Hammick,* the Navy and the Nation will be equally injured. From all that I have known of him, his firmness and decision, and from most undoubted information of his consummate skill, he is above all competition: he, moreover, will not be humbugged,—no common merit among doctors, I trow. Your fast friend, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

Rochetts, 11th September, 1822.

DEAR TUCKER,

I agree with you in toto as to the rapid ruin of the British Navy; instead of discharging valuable and experienced men, of all descriptions, from the dock-yards, the

* The present Sir Stephen Love Hammick, then first surgeon at the Royal Naval Hospital at Plymouth.

commissioners and secretaries of all the boards ought to be reduced to the lowest number they ever stood at, and the old system resorted to: one of the projectors of the present diabolical measures should be gibetted opposite the Deptford Yard, and the other opposite to Woolwich Yard, on the Isle of sad Dogs.

Your uniform friend, ST. VINCENT.

TO ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN.

Rochetts, 22nd January, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

I am filled with the most serious apprehension and dismay, by information I have received this morning that Lord Morley is exerting all his influence with Mr. Canning to get the Plymouth Victualling Office, in contemplation, fixed at Turn Chapel, and Mr. Bastard is working double tides at the Treasury in favour of his property about Staddon. Should either of their propositions be accepted, all which has been projected, and thus far carried into execution, will be rendered abortive. If there are no documents in your office to show what was done under my direction upon this subject, when at the head of the Admiralty, I wish you would send for Admiral Markham, who can give you the best information of Crimble Point, as the only eligible spot, where you are in possession of land, and materials for the building, and a copious stream into the dockyard, which may be directed at a trifling expense; and I implore you, for the welfare of your Country, and my sake, to exert every nerve to prevent the public interest being sacrificed to motives which have so long obtained, and well nigh ruined the Country.

Yours most truly, ST. VINCENT.

TO BENJAMIN TUCKER, ESQ.

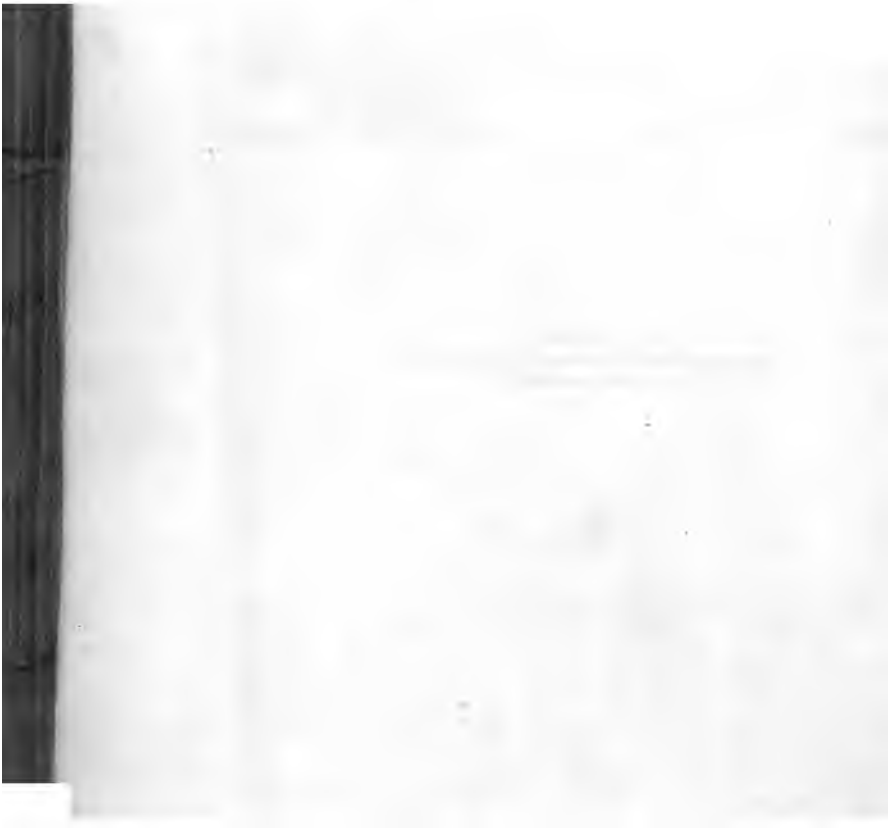
Rochetts, 27th February, 1823.

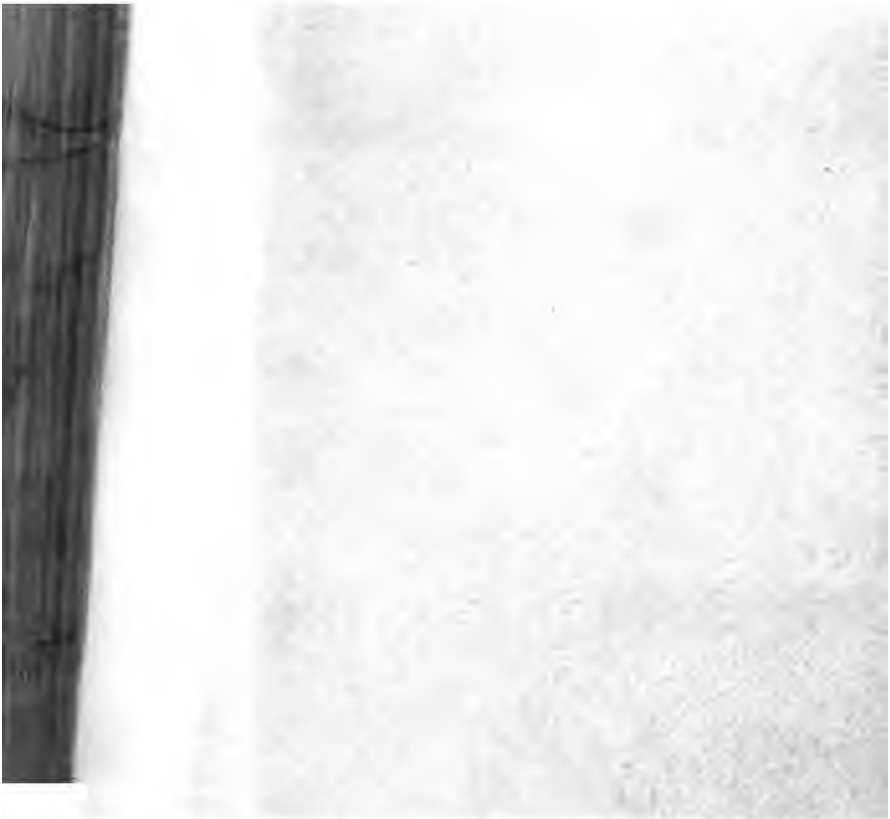
DEAR TUCKER,

Many thanks for your letter of yesterday, which I did not deserve. An abatement of cough enables me at last to write this, to put forth a prayer for self and guests that you will take places three, in the Brentwood stage, for Saturday afternoon, and come down, with a son in each hand, when my carriage shall be ready to take up at the Bull, in Brook Street, and waft you to this house, where you and yours are always sure to meet a hearty welcome from Your old friend ST. VINCENT.

THE END.

LONDON:
Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY, WILSON, and FLEY,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.





never published, and the whole of the ... is believed to have been destroyed with the exception of one copy, which is amongst the rare books of the Greville Library in the British Museum. In 1806 Walter printed "A Key to the Papers which have been presented to the House of Commons upon the subject of the charges preferred against the Earl of St. Vincent." This attitude of *The Times* considerably annoyed Ministers, who withdrew the Government printing from Mr. Walter, and stopped the provision to his paper of the foreign news which at that time was furnished officially to the newspapers. It was this boycott by Pitt's Government which, as explained in the Dictionary of National Biography, induced Mr. Walter to establish *The Times* as an independent journal, with its own system of foreign news and staff of correspondents abroad.

A little later, and while *The Times* was supporting the Government against the Parliamentary attacks which followed the Copenhagen expedition of 1807, and of which St. Vincent was a critic, he writes to his sister, Mrs Ricketts, on February 10, 1808, on the same day on which he made a speech in the House of Lords on the matter :—

> Walter, the proprietor of *The Times* newspaper, is strongly attached to me, but having hitherto approved the expedition to Copenhagen must go on, or the credit of his paper would sink—and had not Ministers resorted to the meanest falsehoods and tricks to justify it they would have found little difficulty (in doing so).

THE J. B. WILLIAMS CO., 71 SOUTHAMPTON ROAD.

Williams' Ho... Sh...

...y at ...
...d is ...
...o to ...
...ors."

...ical ...
If you don't know Williams' be ...
Stick it's worth investig... out.

These prices are for ...
Great Britain only.
From all Chemists and Hairdressers.

...ays I make ...
...ladyship and the base instrument of his ...passions, the publication will reflect eterna... disgrace upon the character of Lord Nelson, what... which will ultimately be stripped of everything but animal courage, of which he certainly is not had an abundant share.

St. Vincent's moaning is unquestion... ably that, if left to the tender mercie... of Lady Hamilton and Mr. Harrison, tions taken Nelson's character would go down tish Islands